

**A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE HOUSING POLICY AND THE STATE'S
INTERVENTION IN MINING TOWNS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Since 2012, there has been increasing government interest in mining towns. This interest was occasioned by the Marikana shooting. This interest, led by the presidency through Inter-ministerial Committee on the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities has had impact on human settlements.

This dissertation provides an overview of the Mining Towns Programme and its evolution, identifies some of the major pitfalls and assumptions of the programme, and proposes an alternative. It also provides and reflects a sustained critique of the approach of the state in the creation of human settlements and the provision of housing in mining towns.

Furthermore, the dissertation attempts to assess the efficacy of human settlements approach to mining towns. In doing this, I argue that despite the increased interest, the approach adopted has fundamental weaknesses. These weaknesses range from the fundamental departure from the original intention and focus of the programme, the over-reliance on the existing but inappropriate human settlements delivery instruments and the ignorance of and the weakened role of local government in the programme.

In its reliance on the existing human settlements delivery instruments, the implementation and delivery of houses has not addressed the problems faced by mineworkers. Moreover, the state has also overlooked the deep historical challenges of mining towns, both in terms of context and practice and this has undermined the effective implementation of the programme. There are also other institutional and socioeconomic problems associated with mining towns and this has not been properly assessed.

The dissertation critically evaluates the approach and the shortcomings of the Mining Towns Programme against these challenges and posits some alternatives.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRU-Community Residential Units (CRU)
DPME -Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
FLISP-Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme
HDA -Housing Development Agency
HSDG-Human Settlements Development Grants
IRDP-Integrated Residential Development Programme
IMC- Inter-Ministerial Committee
MTSF-Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP-National Development Plan
UISP-Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme
SHF-Social Housing Foundation
SHP- Social Housing Programme
SLPs-Social and Labour Plans
SPP-Special Presidential Package
SONA-State of the Nation Address
STP-Spatial Transformation Plan

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

In late 2012, in the aftermath of the tragic events in Marikana, I established an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities to give effect to the Special Presidential Package (SPP) for the revitalisation of mining districts and their labour sending areas. The mandate of the IMC is to oversee the implementation of integrated and sustainable human settlements, improve living and working conditions of mineworkers and determine the development path of mining towns and the historic labour sending areas.

Speech by President Zuma, June 30th, 2015 (Republic of South Africa, 2015a, para 1)

Since 2012, there has been increasing government interest in mining towns. The nationally significant Marikana shooting¹ drew attention to South Africa's mining regions and forced the state into action. This dissertation was precipitated by a personal encounter and deep involvement in what became known as the Mining Towns Programme, a national government priority Programme launched in 2012.

As the South African president, Jacob Zuma, announced in his 2015 speech, a national IMC for the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities was established in 2012. Over the past five years, the IMC has had a large impact on the policies of a range of national departments.

One area of IMC impact has been on human settlements. In this dissertation, I explore the impact of the IMC on the human-settlements approach to mining towns. Drawing on personal experience, expert interviews, and existing grey and published literature, I provide an overview of the Programme and its evolution, identify some of

¹ The Marikana shooting occurred on the 16th of August 2012. 34 mineworkers were shot dead (and many more injured) by members of the South African police service. This followed a protracted labour dispute between the employers and the employees in the platinum belt of North West Province.

the major pitfalls and assumptions of the programme, and propose an alternative. This dissertation provides and reflects a sustained critique of the approach of the state in the creation of human settlements and the provision of housing in mining towns. However, this is not a critique simply for its own sake. Rather, it should be seen as an attempt to take stock of where we are, and open the conversation to alternative propositions.

In this dissertation, I make the following arguments:

First, the original intention of the Mining Towns Programme was aimed at providing a framework within which the improvement of socioeconomic challenges of mining towns could be addressed. Key challenges included problems accessing basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity, as well as issues around access to land, security of tenure, the growth of informal settlements, and the lack of adequate housing. In reality, the Programme did not offer guidance on how to meet these challenges using existing delivery instruments in the human settlements sector. The original objective of improving socioeconomic conditions has thus lost focus. Aided by its existing blunt delivery instruments, the Human Settlements Departments have simply reverted to their traditional brick-and-mortar-project delivery practices, and abandoned the mandate of holistic improvement of the socioeconomic conditions in mining towns.

Second, I contend that the challenges outlined in the broad approach of improving socioeconomic conditions are mainly problems and outcomes of local government's failures to meeting its service delivery obligations and mandates. Access to basic services such water, sanitation, etc. are properly located within the ambit of local government. To this end, I contend that the national Mining Towns Programme failed to adequately appreciate the capacity limitations of local government, thereby limiting the effectiveness of the Programme. This, I argue, was further compounded by the fact that the Programme is inappropriately located in the national sphere of government as opposed to local government sphere.

Third, and building on the preceding argument, even if the interventions into mining towns were to be based on the bricks-and-mortar approach, the existing housing-subsidy instruments are inadequate for this task. Miners do not qualify for most of the applicable national housing-subsidy programmes (such as the individual housing

subsidy, informal settlements upgrading subsidy, etc.) due to their incomes being higher than the subsidy cut-off of R 3, 500 per month. There are other subsidy instruments aimed at delivering rental housing and government assisted bonded housing; however, these have not been used, owing to the government's reluctance to directly intervene in mining towns hitherto 2012. Moreover, there are other practical challenges, such as generous accommodation subsidies issued to miners by the mining companies, which limit participation by other players in mining towns.

Fourth, the mining towns of South Africa have a long and deep history, especially with regards to housing and human settlements. From the beginning of the transition to democratic rule in South Africa, there have been attempts to break away from this history. I contend that the government has not done enough to adequately understand and contextualise the complexities of mine housing pre-1994, nor sufficiently explored what breaking away from it would entail in the post-1994 era. These limitations and lack of greater context undermine the efforts espoused in the current Mining Towns Programme.

Finally, I argue that there is a range of socioeconomic dynamics and institutional limitations that militates against and has the capacity to undermine the national Mining Towns Programme. These dynamics include a volatile and fluctuating labour market that makes mineworkers employment tenuous, thereby increasing migration. These have impact on accommodation and housing options in mining towns and regions. At the institutional level, there are a range of limitations, including a lack of clarity regarding proposed partnerships with the private sector, and the general lack of state capacity to deliver within the mandate.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT & RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

No comprehensive study on the Mining Towns Programme has focused on the human settlements and housing approach. The overarching goals of this research are to understand the design of the national approach to human settlements in mining towns, and to assess the suitability of this approach.

To address this, I will:

- Document the government's rising interest in mining towns in South Africa;
- Clarify and make explicit the current approach to human settlements in mining towns;
- Make use of interviews and existing literature to understand the dynamics of mining towns;
- Use this data to articulate and unpack the shortcomings and challenges of the existing approach to mining towns; and
- Propose an alternative approach to housing in mining towns.

These objectives shape the study methodology.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the wake of the Marikana shooting, government was forced to engage with mining towns, a terrain that it has never before seriously played a significant role in. Mining towns have historically been the domain of the mines, not the state, and most services that support the functioning of mining towns have been provided by the mines. The state, while concerned with mining activities, has paid little attention to the development of the towns adjacent to mines.

However, since the Marikana shooting, the perception of mine communities as 'beyond the state' has changed. There has been widespread recognition that the state must play a role in the development of mining areas and cannot leave that responsibility only to the mining companies. The development of the national government's Mining Towns Programme involves addressing and improving a range of socioeconomic conditions in mining towns, with housing and human settlements becoming one of the most critical components of the Programme. Yet despite five years of implementation, there has never been an academic review or a clear account of the mechanics of the programme.

Notably, there was some concern internally about the approach. “We fell into the trap of the environment we never really understood”,² remarked one of the senior government bureaucrats leading the Mining Towns Programme at national level. Halfway through the five-year programme implementation, there was some admission that outcomes have been rather poor and without any clear impact on the earlier-stated objectives of improving living conditions in mining towns.³

There is an urgent need to review the history of this approach, to articulate the approach (outside of government circles), and to assess its suitability within the mining towns context. Most importantly, it is necessary to understand how the Mining Towns Programme, as well as national interest in mining towns, fit into the complicated spaces of mining areas, where the dynamics of space and community are often shifting and changing. There is also a need for alternatives to be proposed and explored, especially within the broader context of human settlements policy framework.

1.4. THE METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

To address the research questions, I have used a qualitative research method. The research relies heavily on both primary and secondary sources of data.

1.4.1. Case study of the programme

This research is a case study of the Programme. Yin (2003: 13), defines case study research as an “empirical enquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real life context and addresses a situation in which the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. The study, as its primary focus, attempts to understand, measure and assess the human settlement’s impact of government’s intervention in mining towns of South Africa.

Yin (1994) concludes that case-study research is an experiment through which a phenomenon is evaluated and investigated within a particular setting. This includes the evaluation of tenants and characteristics of the phenomenon within a selected

² Internal Mining Towns Review Meeting (2017a).

³ Internal Mining Towns Review Meeting (2017a).

setting and how it behaves in that setting. There are 22 mining towns identified as part of the mining towns programme. Because the programme has not fully matured to measure the impact in a single mining town, the study does not confine itself to a single mining town, but assesses the varying degrees of impact across the different mining towns where appropriate.

Accordingly, in this study, I employ a range of different methods in order to gain a deeper understanding of the mining towns. In this context, I make use of historical analysis and literature on mining towns, as well as interviews. As part of this case study, I draw from a range of data sources and triangulate between them. These data sources are discussed below.

1.4.2. Existing academic work on mining towns

In this study, I draw on the existing literature on mining towns. However, unlike a conventional literature review, I do not intend to isolate the literature around mining towns in a stand-alone chapter; I intend to weave the literature into the larger part of the body of analysis in this study. Part of this analysis relates to the historical context of mining towns, some social and political factors that seek to explain the workings of mining towns, and some contemporary ideas around the programme at government level.

1.4.3. Author's own experience

I have been involved with this Programme for five years. I have personally participated in the formative stages of the programme and have been involved with it until now. I also possess grey data critical to the study, both in terms of written policy and personal notes from participation in numerous internal discussions, meetings and various workshops. My experiences and engagements with various government and private-sector partners have been the source and origins of this research. It is from these engagements that I have gathered valuable experience which allowed me to trace the formation of the programme. This data is pertinent and important to the study and will be documented where appropriate.

1.4.4. Grey literature

Because this is a critical review of a fairly new government programme, there is limited literature on the topic as the programme is still at formative stages and has never been properly reviewed. To the extent that some relevant written data exists, this is only available in grey data i.e. commissioned researches, policy studies and researches. This data will be important in reviewing and contextualising the thoughts and debates around the programme. It is critical to note my role in the programme at the government level, as per the point above.

1.4.5. Expert interviews

It is important to supplement existing literature sources with the views and learned experiences of various experts in the field and senior public officials who were involved in the programme. This includes academic experts, commissioned field research experts, and private-sector role players. Moreover, critical data exists in the form of minutes of meetings, formal internal engagements and interviews with other colleagues.

The study segments interviewees into groups based on the sector through which they participated and played a role in mining towns. As will be shown elsewhere, the Mining Towns Programme is centred around three main social partners: government, labour and business (mining companies). These three partners make up the core of the programme and representatives from each were interviewed to obtain a balanced view of the programme.

Exploring the differences of opinion between these three sectors is particularly interesting not only because of their divergent views on the programme, but also because of the different perspectives each has on the others' roles.⁴ Table 1 (below) lists the interviewees according to the sector they belong to and their role within that sector.

⁴ Personal discussion with the senior official in the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Table 1: List of supplementary interview personnel

SPECIFIC SECTOR	SPECIFIC ROLE	POSITION/ROLE
Government	DPME* ⁵	Director
Government	DPME	DDG*
Government	DHS*	Director
Government	DHS	DDG
Independent researcher	Research experts	Senior Researcher
Academic expert	Academic Research	Senior Researcher
Private sector	Housing Manager	Head: Housing
Private sector	Housing Manager	Corporate Management
Union representative	Labour union	Union leader
Union representative	Labour union	Union leader

1.5. ETHICAL APPROVAL

All the ethical considerations for this study have been taken into account. To this end, the ethics clearance and approval was granted by the University of Cape Town, dated June 2nd 2017.

1.6. RESEARCH OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE

This dissertation is organised into four chapters. The first and current chapter is the introduction, which provides an overview of the research and methodology. Chapter two provides an overview on why we need to understand the Mining Towns Programme within the current frame of government thinking around housing and human settlements. This section traces the historical roots of mining towns in South Africa. Most importantly, it unpacks the actions, processes, the protracted engagements and negotiations across different stakeholder groups, the current

⁵ DPME=Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DHS=Department of Human Settlements
DDG=Deputy Director General

debates and some of the main challenges of the programme. It also outlines current approaches to mining towns.

Chapter three draws on scholarly evidence and established research themes on mining towns, supported by supplementary data collected. It is organised into three subsections: the economic conditions, the social dynamics and the institutional challenges in mining towns. This chapter outlines arguments for and against the Mining Towns Programme, and draws some sharp contradictions between the programme intent and the actual outcomes. Most importantly, it points to the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments and whether the overall approach is appropriate for the Mining Towns Programme.

The fourth and last chapter draws the conclusion and posits ways in which the programme could be improved. A key suggestion is that small-scale rentals should be explored in greater depth, given the lack of diversity of housing options in mining towns.

The use of existing literature, my personal experience and documentation, grey literature, and interviews offers us a full picture of the Mining Towns Programme, its history and challenges. A deeper engagement with miners and the mining sector would undoubtedly benefit this research; however, in recent years, the mining industry has become more sensitive and opaque in open engagement with the outside world. This opaqueness limits the extent to which a researcher can obtain credible primary data in and around mining environments. It is therefore beyond the scope of this mini-dissertation to attempt this. Future research in this area should consider deeper engagement with the mining sector and the intended beneficiaries of mining programmes.

CHAPTER 2: HOW DID WE GET HERE? HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS AND SOME RECENT MANOEUVRES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

There is a new and vigorous rising interest in mining towns by the government of South Africa – not only because of the attention it attracted after the shooting of miners in Marikana, but also because mining towns are now a focus of government policy and action within the human settlements sector. This interest has brought about an important national priority programme whose implementation begins to call into question the efficacy and relevance of existing bureaucratic tools, processes and systems.

It is important to understand and analyse the Mining Towns Programme in the context of past and current debates around mining and human settlements in general. I will contextualise current government interest in the subject by briefly tracing the historical roots of housing in mining towns and housing within the current literature. In doing this, I show how the housing question was historically addressed in mining towns, how it has evolved over time and the implication of this trajectory. I will also demonstrate that the previous approaches to housing challenge in mines and the current attempts by government diverge sharply.

Furthermore, I attempt to show that the prolonged absence of the state in the affairs of mining towns has left it unable to respond and intervene appropriately. I will show how, when the state finally did intervene in mining towns, the processes through which it formed its response were inadequate for the challenge, furthermore the state was unprepared. This lack of preparedness is demonstrated by the budgeting and allocation of resources to projects that were either not ready or not envisaged in the programme through provincial departments, who themselves were not ready to effectively implement the programme at the scale envisaged.

Moreover, it will also be demonstrated that by failing to effectively define the nature of mining towns and its own policy position and strategy, the Department of Human Settlements was not able to negotiate the complexities of the programme. This failure was compounded by a diverse understanding within the sector of what the

programme was meant to achieve, and an inability to break free from the constraints of the existing policy prescripts and the pervading influence of mining companies.⁶ Although other government departments (i.e. Department of Planning and Monitoring) did attempt to develop some strategies in the form of diagnostic reviews, these did not necessarily assist the Department of Human Settlements in its intervention in mining towns (Shisaka, 2016).

2.2. MINE HOUSING AND MINING TOWNS: BRIEF HISTORICAL TRACES

Mining towns are unique within the context of South Africa in that the majority of these towns and their infrastructure were developed, managed, operated and wholly owned by mining companies, a practice that continues to this day. By extension, some of these towns are 'company towns' or mining settlements (Brockett, 1996), while others are industrial towns but whose development is also shaped by trades in mining (Bryceson and Mackinnon, 2012). From the planning stage, they were conceived by and received guidance from, the first mining companies that were established in these regions, thereby cementing their influence for many years to come (Lenka *et al*, 2017a). Modern-day examples are towns such as Mooi-nooi (Lonmin) in the platinum belt in North West province, Hotazel (BHP) in the Northern Cape and Orkney (Anglo American) in North West. This is changing with the emergence of post-apartheid towns such as Liphale and Burgersfort in Limpopo.

According to Demissie (1998), housing and mine housing became one of the central pillars in the development and maintenance of the mining industry and its migrant labour system. Over the years, the form, character and conditions of mine housing have changed. From the early conception of mining compounds, through single-sex hostels, to modern-day large-scale public and private housing schemes, mine housing has followed distinct steps that are loosely related to the politics of racial capitalism in South Africa (Macmillan, 2012). These phases are briefly summarised below.

⁶ Programme review notes

2.2.1. Mining Compounds and Hostels

One of the earliest and most recognisable forms of mine housing in South Africa is the compound. As the mainstay of mine housing over the past 150 years, the compound has played a significant role in determining both settlement character and living conditions in the urban landscapes of South Africa (Macmillan, 2012; Demissie, 1998; Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015; Crush, 1994). From the outset, the compounds served two primary functions: control and paternalism. Control and paternalism were exerted spatially, in terms of deciding where miners would be housed relative to their place of work, and physically, in terms of the internal control of labour by the employer. This spatial and physical control was deployed by employers and by organised labour union structures in later years (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015). This arrangement is important in understanding and contextualising the dynamics defining current role-players and their interests in the present day interventions around mining towns.

The consequences of compounds are well known. First, it achieved the spatial separation of labourers from their families by ensuring that the rest of family members were kept back home without any contact to the miners (Demissie, 1998). This contributed to the breakdown of the family, especially in rural areas (Marais and Cloete, 2013). Second, according to Moodie and Ndatshe (1994), the compound system also undermined the health and welfare of mineworkers. Accordingly, large numbers⁷ of labourers slept in shared/communal dormitories. The dormitories were poorly ventilated and with inadequate ablution and cleaning facilities. The poor health conditions were exacerbated by the fact that the mines did not cater for change houses for labourers to transition from hot and humid underground conditions to often cold surface temperatures (Hunter, 1991). Consequently, these conditions led to respiratory diseases, pneumonia and deaths of labourers.

Despite significant changes over the years, the implications of these past arrangements do not appear to have dissipated. Mining companies, together with organised labour, still define their mandates and interests according to these spatial arrangements. One way in which this plays out is the partisan influence of different

⁷ According Hunter (1991), the number would reach up to 50 workers per dormitory.

stakeholders when decisions are made around where development projects should be located. This invariably clashes with the public interest of municipalities as well as the parochial interest of tribal institutions and authorities. Added to this is the influence of organised labour, which continues to exert power through organising workers and influencing how and where projects should be prioritised.

Figure 1: Internal courtyard of a mining compound



Source: Chamber of Mines: 2017

The transition from compounds to hostels came about slowly, around the late 1960s and the early 1970s. It is around this period that the language game began to shift significantly from compounds to hostels and later to a more acceptable and less offensive “mine village” (Crush, 1992).

Same-sex hostels mushroomed around the mines, becoming one of the biggest infrastructural features in mining areas. To this day, many migrants are still accessing housing through these old hostels. For example, in 2015, nearly 30 000 people in the platinum belt in the North West lived in compounds and hostels (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015). Both compounds and hostels are well known for offering poor living conditions, with poor sanitation, overcrowding, poor ventilation and earthen floors being common. Yet, same sex hostels and compounds remain the original contribution of mine housing in South Africa (SA History, 2016)

Figure 2: Mining compounds in Kimberley



Source: Chamber of Mines, 2017

2.2.2. Hostel Conversion

By the early 1990's, the mining industry was ripe for reforms, and with the encouragement of new housing policies, the compounds and hostels were to be converted into family units. However, it should be noted that although the policy of compounds have long been done away with, there is still significant remnants of mining compounds in many mining areas⁸, with a sizable population of mineworkers still residing in some of these facilities (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015).

From the formation of the current housing policy in the early 1990s to the national Hostel Redevelopment Programme and the adoption of new programmes such as the Community Residential Units (CRU), the demolition and conversion of hostels was always emphasised. This meant that no new hostel-style developments would be permitted, and that all the existing stock will be converted into family units.

⁸ Hostel conversion started to emerge in the late 1980's. The intention was that that hostels should be upgraded into family units. From the early 1990's, there were broader political reforms that culminated into the formation of National Hostel Coordinating Committees, which in turn included hostel redevelopment in the housing discussions in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This ultimately resulted in the formulation of hostel redevelopment programme and the white paper on housing in 1994. The programme was finally replaced by the Community Residential Units (CRU) in the revised National Housing Code of 2006 (Mdunyelwa, 2015; Socio-economic Rights Institute of South Africa, 2011).

The state housing changes and policy direction post-1994 that did away with the hostels was further bolstered by the Mining Charter,⁹ which required that mining companies needed to establish clear measures for improving the standard of housing, including the upgrading of hostels, the conversion of hostels to family units, and the promotion of home ownership options for mine employees. This required the transformation of single-sex dormitories into single-room apartments with shared kitchens, as well as family units.

The changes in the Hostel Redevelopment Programme were targeted at all areas and industries where they were prevalent. Prominent amongst these were the mining industry and railway operations. It is important to note however that even with these well-intended responses towards the hostel problem, the efforts by both the private sector and the state has remained isolated and disparate. This is evidenced by the fact that government, despite its comprehensive Social Housing programme, has yet to fully implement this programme in mining regions (Cloete, Marais and Venter, 2009). Accordingly, the regions remain spatially untransformed whilst integration with the surrounding communities, being one of the objectives of the Hostel Redevelopment Programme, is limited.

2.2.3. New Housing Suburbs

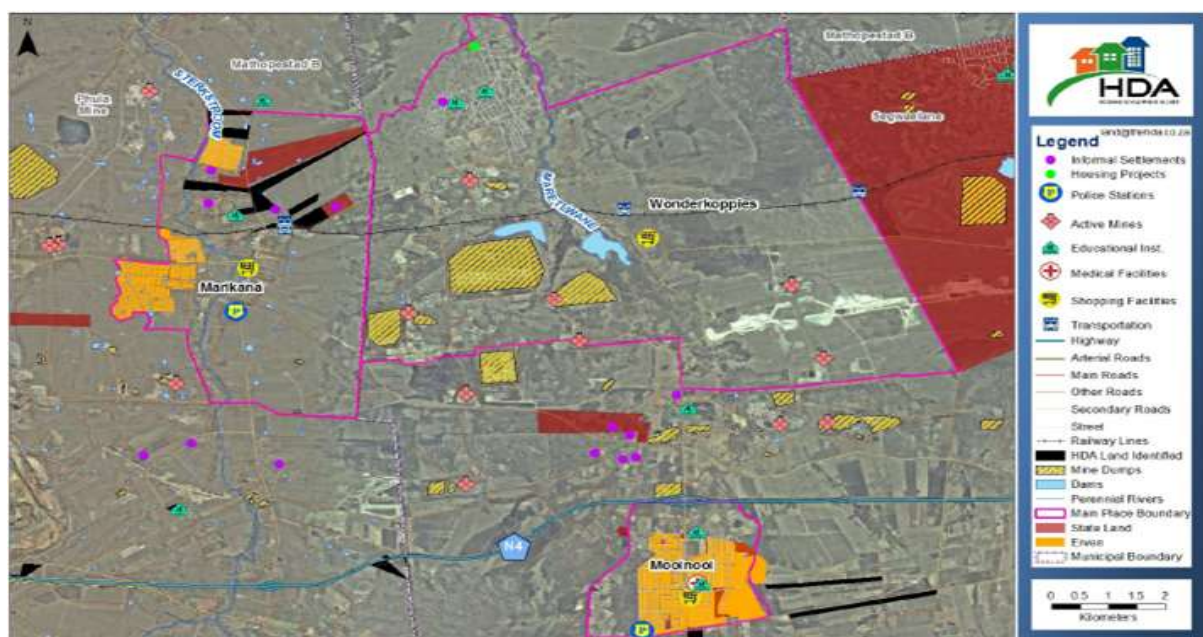
One significant change (since 1980s) in mineworker housing has been the development of new suburbs outside the actual mining operations areas. These suburbs have sprung up sporadically all over the landscape, but at least sprinkled far from the potential hazards of mining operations. These suburbs epitomise the class hierarchy of the mines in South Africa (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015; Macmillan, 2012).

The hierarchy is visible in the differences between the employees who reside in these suburbs i.e. the managerial, skilled employees, who are mainly white (Marais and Cloete, 2009), and the rest of the marginally skilled labour force, mostly black,

⁹ The Mining Charter was originally developed as a regulation to the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, Act 28 of 2002 (MPRDA). The charter requires that all mining companies submit their Social and Labour Plans (SLPs) which detail how they plan to achieve compliance with the charter, as a prerequisite for mining rights license (Republic of South Africa, 2004).

who are accommodated either in the hostels or apartments, or renting other forms of accommodation elsewhere. These suburbs are segregated urban enclaves, subverting whatever urban planning policy logic may be in place in the surrounding towns. Because of local authorities lack of capacity to provide coherent planning direction and the prolonged absence of government in the affairs of mining towns, these suburbs represent new extremes in the reproduction of mining towns geographies (Makgetla and Levin, 2016; Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015).

Figure 3: The Mooinooi spatial enclave insulated from the mining activities north of the N4, North West



Source: The Housing Development Agency: 2016

The figure above shows the location of the Mooinooi mine village cushioned away from the mining operations areas in the platinum belt, and located south of the N4 (the 'platinum highway'). It can be seen how the village is enclaved from the major operational activities of the mines in the north.

Figure 4: The well-furnished Mooi-nooi mine village



Source: The Housing Development Agency, 2016

These suburbs have high levels of access and internal mobility and are insulated from the precarious environmental conditions prevalent around mining operations. However, their segregation seriously undermines the development of efficient urban forms. Infrastructure associated with these enclaves is not accessible to the broader public, and does nothing to improve access to services in the nearby sprawling informal settlements.

One way that the mining companies have been able to build these settlements is the transfer of housing stock to the middle managers who are able to pay high bond costs and levies, as opposed to the rest of the mine labour force (see Marais and Cloete, 2009). Debates around what kinds of interventions in the contemporary mining towns should look like continue with sharp contrasts i.e. with the state fashioning itself as the champion of those already in dire living conditions and the private sector and mining companies seemingly intent on consolidating these enclaves.¹⁰ Several issues hinder the resolution of housing in mining towns. On the one hand, the practice of mining companies building accommodation within isolated spatial enclaves and later transferring the asset to miners is not sustainable. Some

¹⁰ Current debate on the collaboration between the state and mining companies through the Mining Towns Programme.

mining companies are seeking to transfer risky assets to the public sphere; if the mine declines and ultimately shuts down, managing these becomes the responsibility of the state. On the other hand, across all spheres of government, the public sector lacks the capacity and wherewithal to deliver housing solutions at the pace and scale required.

2.3. THE EMERGENCE OF THE MINING CHARTER IN THE EARLY 2000S

As shown in the previous paragraphs, the state did not play a huge role in mining towns, both in terms of actual urban governance and human settlements, until at least the 1990s. Even then, its role was mainly restricted to policy changes but little to do with the actual intervention in the affairs of mining areas and human settlements development. Even 1994 did not necessarily usher in real intervention in mining towns, although there were new conversations around and further policy positions on areas such as hostels and the need to introduce the changes to eradicate the poor conditions of mineworkers. This policy shift agenda shaped the changes in mining companies efforts in the hostel conversion programme. The first post-1994 state intervention in mine housing and their attendant conditions was pronounced on the passing of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002 (MPRDA), through the Mining Charter. With this document, the state set out two main principles relating to housing and housing conditions such as ensuring a decent standard of housing for mineworkers and development of social, physical and economic integrated housing within and outside the mining areas (Republic of South Africa, 2002)

It should however be noted that even with the passing of the MPRDA, the government did not necessarily actively invest in or prioritise the mining areas. Most parts of the Mining Charter required the mining companies to transform housing and living conditions around the mining areas. It was not until 2012 that the state started to play a bigger role in these areas, culminating in the development and funding of the Mining Towns Programme. All the six provinces where there are significant mining operations started to receive a conditional grant in their housing allocation after 2012. This grant is meant to be used for project planning and implementation in mining regions, ostensibly to alleviate dire living conditions in these areas. One of

the experts involved has revealed that at the height of the mining boom of the mid-2000s, there were warnings within government that, given the pace of change that was taking place at the time, the platinum belt was going to outstrip the state's capacity for effective service delivery.

Recent experience has shown that none of these projects show any potential to integrate the existing and better-serviced settlements in and around these areas. If anything, there is a growing gap between the mineworkers, who largely do not qualify for these schemes and a host of other communities, particularly those in informal settlements, who do qualify and can access subsidised housing as a result of their income levels, but are not necessarily directly employed in the mines.¹¹ This has remained one of the persistently thorny issues for labour and union representatives.

2.4. THE MARIKANA MASSACRE AND THE AFTERMATH: A REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE AND THE FORMULATION OF THE MINING TOWNS PROGRAMME

August 16, 2012, the day on which 34 miners were shot by South Africa's police service, marked the turning point for government's interest and focus on mining towns (Lenka *et al*, Undated). Soon after this national disaster, the government conducted a study that identified a number of problems around mining towns (see subsection 2.4.5 below). These problems became the broad thematic areas upon which the Mining Towns Programme and its interventions would be hinged on.

The Mining Towns Programme, under the name Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities became a formalised response by which government would provide a dedicated platform through which various challenges around mining towns would be holistically addressed. The programme assigned roles to a number of

¹¹ There is growing tensions between these groups, with miners feeling that they are excluded from the very intervention that was meant for them. As a result and at the time of writing, miners and unions have stopped the occupation of the government mixed typology project in Marikana (individual and rental units) because they felt it unfairly advantaged beneficiaries who were not mineworkers by receiving free government house while they are allocated rental apartments in which they are expected to pay monthly rents. There have been some talks that the government was considering raising the subsidy cut-off to accommodate the miner's circumstances.

government departments in the mining towns areas. The Department of Human Settlements was expected to play a specific role around housing and human settlement conditions.

2.4.1. The Social Accord: Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) and the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities, 2012.

In late 2012 and 2013, a series of important national processes set the stage for the design of the Mining Towns Programme.

In October 2012, following the Marikana disaster and its aftermath, President Zuma led the signing of a social accord between government, business, and labour, referred to as the Special Presidential Package (SPP), which made a number of commitments, i.e:

- a. Part 1: Restoring confidence in labour-market institutions, addressing income inequalities, and building social cohesion
- b. Part 2: Action to combat violence and lawlessness
- c. Part 3: Addressing socioeconomic challenges

(Shisaka, 2016, p. 6)

Subsequently, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was established for the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities, to address Part 3 of the Social Accord. The IMC was to focus on:

- a. Integrated and sustainable human settlements
- b. Improved socioeconomic conditions
- c. Improved working conditions of mineworkers
- d. Decent living conditions for mineworkers, and a meaningful contribution to the development trajectory of mining towns and labour-sending areas

(Shisaka, 2016, p. 6)

In June 2014, the President, in the State of the Nation Address (SONA), consolidated the SPP package for single-point coordination under the management

of the President. A single terms of reference was developed, bringing together the agreement and the Revitalisation of Distressed Mining Towns and Communities. The aim was to address the overlap and to formalise the role of the project secretariat formed in the Presidency. The SPP is therefore responsible for:

- a. Coordination and facilitation of work from different stakeholders
- b. Ensuring effective implementation of commitments made on the SPP
- c. Providing support and monitoring implementation

(The Housing Development Agency, 2017b, p. 4)

2.4.2. Defining the Original Programme Focus and Roles of Human Settlements in Mining Towns

The vision of the Mining Towns Programme was holistic and ambitious. As outlined above, there are four specific areas that the Mining Towns Programme was directed to focus on. It is clear from these key focus areas that the intervention was mainly meant to intervene at a higher level than the normal project-based delivery planning and cycles. Thus, the original programme mandate is defined as follows:

- a. **Integrated and sustainable humans settlements:** The intention was to attempt to move away from single-sector delivery processes and isolated housing-development schemes in mining areas. Partnerships between government and the mining companies were encouraged. Most importantly, it also encouraged the identification of mine infrastructure that could be redirected to support social purposes such as housing and sanitation for communities living around mine areas and operations.
- b. **Improved socioeconomic conditions:** The programme recognised that the challenges in mining towns would not be resolved simply by delivering houses, but instead required focusing on issues around universal access to basic services. The programme recognised that mining communities had no access to such basic services as water, sanitation and electricity, and that had to be prioritised in the programme. From a human settlements point of view, the most appropriate instrument to deliver on this mandate was seen to be the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP). With UISP, the focus

could shift to providing access to land, access to services, resolving tenure issues and ultimately offering access to housing. Moreover, UISP was to resolve the problems associated with settlements located in poor and environmentally precarious conditions through assessments and relocation planning.

- c. **Improved working conditions of mineworkers:** This focuses on healthy working conditions for mineworkers. This section does not impact on human settlements.
- d. **Decent living conditions for mineworkers:** Prior to the announcement of the Mining Towns Programme, the mining companies, through the Mining Charter, were always required to provide decent accommodation for mineworkers. This was the goal of the Hostel Conversion Programmes and other housing programmes aimed at facilitating and promoting home ownership by miners. The Mining Towns Programme emphasised that this needed to continue, but should also address the need for partnerships to deliver integrated housing projects in mining towns.

2.4.3. Institutional Set-Up and the Housing Development Agency

In order to understand how the Mining Towns Programme was realised, it is important to get an overview of the institutional arrangements which were used to implement it.

The national Department of Human Settlements, having realised the need for better coordination, assigned coordinating responsibility and accountability of the programme to one of its national entities, The Housing Development Agency (HDA).

The HDA was established in 2009 and had been active in consolidating and assembling state and privately-owned land to support human settlement delivery, providing project delivery support services, and enhancing the capacity of municipalities and provinces to deliver integrated sustainable human settlements (The Housing Development Agency, 2017a).

At the institutional level, the programme was designed to operate within the following institutional delivery mechanism:

Table 2: Institutional framework for mining towns

Institution	Role Players and Composition	Defined Mandates
Government	▪ National Department of Human Settlements	▪ Programme owners
	▪ Provincial Department of Human Settlements	▪ Developer ▪ Housing subsidies owner ▪ Funding source
	▪ Local municipalities	▪ Implementation support and service delivery
	▪ The Housing Development Agency	▪ Programme manager ▪ Programme implementation ▪ Funding source
Private Sector	▪ Mining companies operating in the identified mining towns	▪ Developers ▪ Funding source

Source: Author's own work

Although the HDA was appointed as the overall programme manager and made responsible for implementation, the entity did not receive ring-fenced capital funding for this purpose. Funding for the programme was still allocated through the provincial Departments of Human Settlements (in the form of Human Settlements Development Grants-HSDG) as part of the normal funding processes and allocations. Some experts have noted that there were clear and practical dilemmas with this situation. On one hand, the R 1 billion rands allocation to the programme was too small to make any meaningful impact if it were taken out of the HSDG. This would have created weak and splintered funding streams. On the other hand, embedding this ring-fenced funding simply gave way for the provincial departments to deviate from the socioeconomic improvement mandates to project based support. This is what makes provincial departments more powerful in deciding outcomes of human settlements policies (Socioeconomic Rights Institute, 2011). To play a direct management and implementation role, the HDA would have to enter into specific Programme and project-delivery agreements with the respective provinces and municipalities participating in the Mining Towns Programme.¹²

Upon reaching agreement with specific provinces and municipalities, the HDA was expected to finalise the programme delivery agreement with private-sector players

¹² These arrangements are to be governed by implementation protocols between the HDA and the provinces. It was deemed that once such a protocol is entered into, the HDA will be deemed to have obtained the entire mandate of the government from national to local government and all its activities will be for and on behalf of all the government role players.

operating in the mining town concerned. It is important to note that these arrangements were not mandatory, especially on the part of the provincial departments who received direct funding for the Programme. The HDA could only take on the Programme management and implementation role after reaching an agreement with a province. Where no such agreement exists, it is not clear what the role of the HDA is, despite being the appointed national manager of the Mining Towns Programme. This resulted in the Programme lacking coherence, focus and inconsistent in application.

2.4.4. The Role of Tribal Authorities

There seems to be a confusion regarding what constitutes mining towns between the immediate physical space within which the conditions manifest and the broader municipal areas that host these towns. This talks to issues of context, extent, geography and sub-regional geographies that make up these places. No strategy or framework has ever defined these geographies in relation to actual meaning of a mining town and its many different role players. These geographies and sub-regional geographies are important to different role players and their immediate parochial interest. These are seen through labour unions and their governance structures and systems, mining companies and their logic around infrastructure asset investment decisions and operations such as bus transport system for their employees, tribal communities and their own hold to keep the tribal governance intact (Mnwana, 2016, 2015)¹³. These are the different conditions and meanings of mining towns that have been left unexplained, not fully contextualised and harmonised to properly inform the kinds of interventions envisaged.

This point is important given the constantly changing dynamics of these regions. According to Chiguno (2013), there is an entrenched socio-political dynamic that has developed along with migrant labour system in mining areas, especially in those areas where tribal and ethnic institutions are prevalent¹⁴. This is seen through the

¹³ One of the mining companies has confirmed that geographic descriptions and delineations are important to them because these help them to plot and plan their primary area of responsibility in terms of different obligations i.e. transport for their workers (Mining Towns Partnerships Meeting, 2017)

¹⁴ There are disagreements and 'ambiguities' as to the nature, extent and role of chiefs over communal land (Mnwana, 2018).

system where some community and societal governance systems are shared between tribal institutions and labour unions, with state at times completely a non-player in this dynamic¹⁵. There is an image here in which the tribal institutions govern and dominate those areas originally occupied by their ethnic community group (Mnanwa, 2016; Rubin and Harrison, 2015). According to Claassens (2014), part of this dominance was enhanced by the perceived powers that traditional leadership enjoy in post-1994 governance arrangements. On the other hand labour unions exercise some governance functions and power in new informal settlements enclaves dominated by migrant ethnic groups located on tribal land (Makgetla and Levin, 2016; Krämer, 2016; Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015).

To this end, those that reside in informal settlements are largely seen as illegal settlers and outsiders in that the land itself still belongs to the tribe, who in turn enjoy recognised legal rights over the land which they make available to mining companies in return for royalties. There is evidence that over the years, there have been attempts to claim the land back from the occupiers, however this has not been successful because of strong political structures that exist around these enclaves, which the outsiders are able to leverage and tap into (Chiguno, 2013; Smith, 2015). There is a lingering concern by the local tribesman that those that are deemed outsiders may become majority in some of these areas, thereby threatening the existing community's identity and culture and the effort to revive and strengthen the community's structures (Mnanwa, 2015; Manson and Mbenga 2012; Lund, 2011). However, as Crush (1994), observed this form of isolation of mining community from surrounding society is not necessarily new.

Consequently, this seemingly socio-political dynamic has translated into spatial outcome where new and largely informal settlements have brought ethnicity and human settlements into sharp focus. In this context, the emerging and growing settlements, starting from their names, are defined by sharp ethnic divide whose genesis is precipitated by the very migrant labour system. Essentially, the emerging settlement geography is intrinsically linked to ethnicity (Chiguno, 2013; Makgetla and

¹⁵ An informal settlement known as Nkaneng in Rustenburg Platinum Belt is known to have its own local police forum, which takes total control in terms of maintaining order, monitoring and preventing crime with almost total jurisdiction over the area. This is plausible if one has regard to the fact, as one of the critical pillars of the social accord signed between state, business and labour, rule of law was specifically single out.

Levin, 2016). By implication, this creates difficulties in creating viable and integrated communities as envisaged through the programme, especially the upgrading and formalisation of informal settlements. This relates to such issues as decision making processes around prioritisation of development areas, permissions and negotiations for land release with tribal authorities. These points were well pronounced at the Farlam Commission¹⁶ i.e. mining companies arguing that traditional authorities opposed the formalisation of informal settlements located in their areas. Traditional leaders are concerned that by consenting to the formalisation of informal settlements in their areas of jurisdiction will inadvertently legitimize migrant workers as permanent and rightful occupiers of the land that belongs to the tribe (Republic of South Africa, 2015d).

2.4.5. The 2015 Mining Towns Strategy¹⁷

In 2015, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) commissioned a study to come up with a housing strategy for mining towns. The strategy was ostensibly intended to provide a framework to approach the accommodation problems of mineworkers. From the outset, the strategy recognised the fact that informal settlements are part of the biggest challenge around mining towns. It also attempted to differentiate the different types of mining towns, in terms of housing conditions and the general level of investment in relation to current and future housing-related decisions (i.e. whether the town is suitable for permanent and long term fixed investments such as a house).

The strategy acknowledged different kinds of interventions required to address poor living conditions for mining communities, i.e. housing, improvement and access to basic services, and sorting out land-tenure issues. However, and in sharp contrast to the strategy, progress is only measured in terms of housing units built, this subsequently shaped the implementation of the programme, focusing attention on the number of units delivered as opposed to broader socioeconomic objectives (National Treasury Programme Notes, 2016).

¹⁶ The Farlam Commission was set up by the president to investigate the circumstances of the Marikana disaster in August 2012.

¹⁷ The Strategy was named Status Quo Review and Strategic Approach for the Accommodation and Integration of Mineworkers in the 15 Priority Mining Towns (Shisaka, 2016).

Furthermore, the strategy identified and advocated for a specific set of interventions, as outlined above, to be implemented in mining towns. There is no clear definition of what a mining town is, at least in the diagnostic report. Mining towns were generally characterised as those towns where growth and decline (boom and bust) was inextricably linked to mining activities and operations (see Bryceson, and Mackinnon, 2012). In the final analysis, however, references to towns were interchangeably mixed with the overall municipal areas. There is also no clear methodology on what qualified these towns as mining towns. To this end, 15 mining towns were initially identified with a diagnostic tool that considered factors such as locational profile, economic profile, demography, access to basic services and housing, etc. (Shisaka, 2016). Another seven towns were later added. The report contains some compelling facts about the complexity of housing conditions in mining towns and the most suitable responses thereto. This implies that thinking around the issue has to embrace different scales of interventions, particularly if greater involvement will be required of other sector departments (who have largely remained absent so far).

Table 3: The initially-identified 15 mining towns

Province	District	Municipality	Main Urban Centre
Limpopo	Waterberg	1. Lephalale	Ellisras
	Sekhukhune	2. Greater Tubatse	Burgersfort
		3. Fetakgomo	Apel
		4. Elias Motsoaledi	Groblersdal
Gauteng	Westrand	5. Mogale City	Krugersdorp
		6. Merafong	Carletonville
		7. Randfontein	Randfontein
		8. Westonaria	Westonaria
Mpumalanga	Nkangala	9. Emalahleni	Witbank
		10. Steve Tshwete	Middelburg
North West	Bojanala	11. Rustenburg	Rustenburg
		12. Madibeng	Brits
		13. Moses Kotane	Mogwase
	Kenneth Kaunda	14. Matlosana	Klerksdorp
Free State	Lejwaleputswa	15. Matjhabeng	Welkom

Source: Shisaka, 2016

Table 4: The additional seven mining towns

Province	District	Municipality	Main Urban Centre
Limpopo	Waterberg	16. Thabazimbi	Thabazimbi
Mpumalanga	Nkangala	17. Thaba Chweu	Lydenburg
North West	Bojanala	18. Kgetlengrivier	Koster
Northern Cape	John Taolo	19. Gamagara	Kathu
	Gaetsewe	20. Ga-Segonyana	Kuruman
	ZF Mgcawu	21. Tsantsabane	Postmasburg
		22. Kgatelopele	Danielskuil

Source: Programme notes

Emerging from the strategy was a proposal that the Department of Human Settlements should develop an additional plan in the mould of the transformation agenda.¹⁸ This was to be achieved through a plan called the Spatial Transformation Plan (STP). The plan was to define development and spatial zones and areas that promote transformation outcomes for human settlements. Apart from outlining the three broad areas that the spatial transformation plan should address, there was no further explanation as to meaning of the spatial transformation as a plan or tool and how different it should be from the other legislated planning tools available at regional and local levels. Further explanation was that this was largely building on the transformation agenda already forming part of the human settlements.

2.4.6. R1.2 Billion for Mining Towns

By 2014, an estimated budget of R1.2 billion was made available for the Mining Town Programme implementation from the Department of Human Settlements.¹⁹ This budget was allocated directly to the provinces whose towns formed part of the 22 mining towns selected as qualifying for the programme.²⁰ It is from these budgets that projects would be implemented. Most importantly, the budgets were ring-fenced by National Treasury as 'mining town' funding. However, the planning and

¹⁹ The mining towns budget was part of the HSDG funding allocation ring-fenced for mining towns programme. In other words, there was no any additional money on top what provinces were already receiving through HSDG (M. Nefale, personal communication, September 23, 2017)

²⁰ It is important to note that originally, the towns selected were 15 and later increased to 22 as a result of lobbying from different quarters. It is not clear what the criteria was applied in this process.

implementation of the programme was to be done via the normal government funding channels through provincial grant funding. Nothing in the grant funding suggested that there was anything different from normal project-funding models for the rest of the provincial allocations as these were allocated via the same orthodox business plans and processes at national level. To date, the programme review process has found that the lack of firm institutional arrangements between the Department of Human Settlements (DHS), the HDA and the provinces, as well as hastiness in funding the programme, has led to poor outcomes for the programme, i.e. that projects were being implemented but these were not in the business plans submitted to the DHS (M. Nefale, personal communication, September 23, 2017).

Curiously though, the first funding allocation from mid-2014/15 financial year shows something fundamentally problematic and entirely in conflict with the founding goals of the programme. That is, while the Programme was seen as a partnership with the mining companies, no conversations had taken place by the time the government started allocating budgets for the Programme. This was clearly driven by the need for government to demonstrate the exigencies of the situation and to rapidly address the dire socioeconomic conditions in these areas. Yet at that time, there had never been any formal engagements with the mining companies, other than sporadic initiatives undertaken on a voluntary basis.²¹

2.4.7. The Indaba: some negotiations and trade-offs: 2015

In an attempt to gather support for the efforts of government through the SPP, the Minister of Mineral Resources, Mr. Ngoako Ramatlodi, stated the following:

Government will convene all stakeholders in the industry in a lab process whose main objectives is to develop implementable results that will transform the industry and increase investment, in line with the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP).

(Republic of South Africa, 2015b, para 2)

²¹ Some companies were engaging individually with various government departments and entities in the hope of arriving at some agreement on possible partnerships.

By late 2015, there was a realisation that the social-accord arrangement had not been effectively canvassed amongst all stakeholders affected by the Programme. Despite the government having already allocated funding for human settlements, there was still no clarity on how the private sector and mining companies were going to participate in the arrangement. The Mining Indaba (also known as Mining Phakisa²²) took place in October 2015. The Mining Indaba was the first gathering at which most stakeholders in mining towns were represented: the state, represented by various national departments and provincial and local governments; business, represented by mining companies; labour, in the form of unions; and traditional leadership authorities.

The Indaba was packaged into different themes affecting mining, i.e. human settlements, efficient mining technology, labour efficiency, regulatory frameworks, local beneficiation, local economic development, etc. On the human settlements front, the negotiations touched on the approaches and responsibilities around housing within the context of mining communities. One of the persistent questions was the different understandings of what government interventions implied in the greater context of mining towns and the communities around these areas, especially given that mining companies seemingly only sought to meet human settlement challenges insofar as their employees were concerned. The impact of the programme beyond single sector initiatives and the participation of the mining companies needed to be unpacked.

2.5. REFLECTIONS ON THE MINING TOWN PROGRAMME, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to understand how the programme was designed and eventually implemented. The design does not reflect the desire to address broader socioeconomic conditions in a holistic way, as was the goal in earlier policy statements. Instead, it reflected a more conventional government approach, in

²² The government Phakisa programme, loosely translated 'hurry', was designed to coordinate and fast-track the pace at which different government departments and stakeholders jointly address challenges in specific sectors in order to achieve results. Phakisa's have taken place in other sectors such as agriculture, health, etc.

essence reverting to housing delivery through large-scale projects. In the end, the programme was designed as follows:

- a. **Land-assembly support for mining towns:** The HDA was to support land assembly to enable the planning, pipelining and implementation of new priority projects. This entails prioritising land acquisition and assembly in strategic areas of impact around mining communities.
- b. **Informal settlements upgrade in mining towns:** Informal settlements upgrading is seen as the biggest opportunity for intervention in mining towns. Accordingly, informal settlements in mining towns should be prioritised for project implementation. To this end, the biggest budget allocation for the current Medium Term Strategic Framework²³ (MTSF) period (2014-2019) was informal settlements upgrading. Informal settlement upgrade is therefore seen as a significant component for implementation; however, implementation so far has only focused on greenfield projects.
- c. **Project implementation support:** The programme was envisaged to provide technical project-delivery support to mining town projects. This support includes planning, project resourcing, and technical implementation, as well as reporting, monitoring, and reviews to the relevant structures. In practice, this support led to mere delivery of houses, such as in Liphilale, with the planning and delivery of approximately new 5000 units and Marikana with the delivery of 4000 units, etc. This delivery is not clearly linked to broader socioeconomic concerns and the upgrading of informal settlements.
- d. **Infrastructure and capacity support:** One of the biggest challenges in mining towns is the lack of sufficient public infrastructure to support development. This is evident in the lack of capacity in bulk infrastructure that restricts human settlement interventions. Even when infrastructure exists, it is poorly coordinated to support joint programmes between the government and mining companies towns without substantial investments. The aim of the programme to make use of old mine infrastructures, such as bulk water, to support human settlements, by coming into infrastructure-sharing arrangements between government and the private sector. However, all of

²³ This is government's strategic commitments aligned with the elected government's term of office. Out of 1.5 million housing opportunities targeted for delivery between 2014 and 2019, it was decided that 750 000 of these should come from informal settlements upgrade programme.

these initiatives were aimed at new projects, as opposed to creating access to settlements that already had poor living conditions.

- e. **Partnerships strategy:** The Mining Towns Programme is based on the idea of partnership between the government and private-sector mining companies. Initial engagements with the mining companies were expected to achieve specific goals, including the production of a development strategy, determining the programme delivery scope, the identification of project areas and agreeing on a development model and funding mechanism. It was envisaged that these partnerships would draw on a range of delivery instruments, including state housing subsidies (e.g. individual subsidies, rental housing, and site-and-services options), private-sector bonds, and employer-assisted housing schemes supported by government grants and private-sector financing.²⁴ None of these had anything to do with improving existing living conditions.
- f. **Labour-sending areas:** The final area of intervention is the strategy on labour-sending areas. These are areas or regions from which the majority of (mainly unskilled) mineworkers originate from – mainly the Eastern Cape and some parts of KwaZulu Natal. The aim is to support those mineworkers who want to build homes in their areas of origin. Support ranges from meeting housing aspirations and preferences of mineworkers in labour sending areas, transaction/financial support in case of owner-builder programme.

We can see that from time of Marikana massacre to the present, the programme has transitioned from a holistic approach to one focused on producing housing and new projects. All the subsequent actions have focused on housing ownership, mostly delivered by the state through its subsidy programme on the one hand, and the mining companies through their housing schemes and subsidised rental apartments on the other. In other instances, attempts have been made to deliver housing through instruments such as the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP), although successes under this model are few and far between. FLISP is

²⁴ This was to be done through Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP). This is the government backed programme that targets those who earn monthly salary between R3500 and R15 000 and are able to secure partial loans to purchase a property in the private market. The government subsidy can finance up to R 87 000 once-off (Republic of South Africa, 2010).

aimed at 'the gap market', i.e. those that earn too much to qualify for government subsidies but earn too little to obtain bonds from the private markets.

The government set additional goals in the 2014 to 2019-MTSF— around 1.5 million housing opportunities, according to the following categories: 750 000 to be upgraded, 563 000 individual housing units, 110 000 loan-backed housing, and a further 72 000 affordable social/rental units. It is clear programme performance assessment that implementation is geared towards the delivery of houses; there is no attempt to measure or quantify the progressive improvement of a number of households gaining access to services such as water, access to sanitation and electricity. It bears little resemblance to the original intentions of the programme.

2.6. CONCLUSIONS

Mine housing has evolved from the oppressive compounds, designed to achieve a specific set of objectives relevant to the time. The hostel programme that took its place lasted for the better part of the late 20th century. In an attempt to transform the industry and the living conditions of its workers, the mining industry later developed new housing schemes that became known as mine villages. However, this model is limited in that it is largely reserved for middle management, and less so for the unskilled labour who still have to seek accommodation elsewhere. In fact, the development of segregated mine villages has further weakened the already-poor capacity of government to perform urban management duties in mining towns. There are many examples of the unforeseen consequences of this model, especially in areas whose fortunes have deteriorated.²⁵

The Mining Towns Programme is now well underway, fully funded, and resourced; however, it has a number of weaknesses. The government's ambivalence to the affairs of mining towns prior to Marikana robbed it of critical experience it needed to confront the mining towns challenge, resulting in its failure to frame an effective response to the problem. From inception, government has attempted to put in place

²⁵ The Lawyers for Human Rights documented a recent mine closure in Carletonville. Outcomes are always predictable when the mining economy declines, i.e. capital flight, disinvestment, unemployment, etc. The implications are immediately palpable for former mine employees in these settlements – on the personal front is isolation, indebtedness, and hunger, while at the community scale, there is the degeneration of infrastructure, limited access to basics such water and sanitation, and health risks, crime and all sorts of social problems (Lawyers for Human Rights, 2017).

a process through which there will be a dedicated response to this problem. To date, however, no concrete agreements have been arrived at. This is largely because of the absence of a framework for engagement with the private sector and organised labour (i.e. unions). Moreover, the government has not structured its institutional framework to respond cohesively to the identified challenges of mining towns.

There is currently a departure from the broad intervention that was focused on improving socioeconomic conditions in the mining areas. For example, there is a strong focus on fast-tracking and supporting existing human settlement projects. At the core of the programme is to address the poor living conditions. The current form of intervention has had little impact on the mineworkers.

Lastly, the programme has not defined what, exactly, the mining towns are, nor identified the underlying critical differences between them. This is important because the response needs to be appropriately tailored to the specifics of each town.

From here, I turn to the next chapter, in which I focus on some of the conditions that militate against the presumptions upon which the Mining Towns Programme was established.

CHAPTER 3: MATCHING ELEPHANTS WITH TRUCKS: A DISJUNCTURE BETWEEN INTENTION AND REALITIES ON THE GROUND

3.1. BACKGROUND

It is important to understand the social, economic and institutional dynamics of mining towns. These dynamics, which will be discussed in the following section, offer insights into problems with the current design of the programme.²⁶ The importance of matching the dynamics of these areas with the appropriate interventions cannot be overstated. As shown in the previous chapter, however, the current approach does not respond adequately to these contextual issues. As one prominent housing researcher noted:

By matching elephants with trucks, the approach ignores some of the fundamental disjunctures and shortcomings largely inherent in the human settlement delivery value chain.

(M. Rubin, personal communication, July 25, 2017)

Echoing this, Lenka *et al* (Undated, p. 1) argue that:

National responses tend to ignore the economic problems associated with mine downscaling and suggest rather an increase in human settlement development. The result is the apparent mismatch between what is required at the local level and the support actually being received from the national sphere.

This Chapter attempts to expand on the economic, social and institutional challenges that impact the efficacy of the Mining Towns Programme. Having outlined the historical background against which the government conceived of it, I attempt in this chapter to outline some of the fundamental weaknesses with the approach, based on a range of factors that are elaborated on hereunder. In this chapter I also introduce arguments for different approaches that could have been considered for the programme. These however are fully explored in the final chapter.

²⁶ National Treasury programme notes

At the broader level, the government continues to approach the challenges around mining towns in an isolated and blunt way, where human settlement interventions are equated to the simple delivery of houses. This approach ignores the realities of mine downscaling and closures, and contradicts the original intentions of the Programme. Institutionally, mineworkers remain unable to access the majority of housing products, making the interventions meaningless for them. Furthermore, the government seem unprepared to deal with these contradictions, and even less so with the community dynamics that underpin these areas.

3.2. ECONOMIC DYNAMICS

There are a number of critical economic dynamics in mining areas which have not been addressed in the current designs of the programme.

3.2.1. Boom-and-Bust and One-Size-Fits-All Approach

Mines have finite life spans. The notion of mine downscaling and the long-term implications of mine closure are not once referred to in the Mining Charter (Lenka *et al*, Undated). This implies that the Mining Charter is mainly geared for the growth associated with mining development and not the closure of the mine, just as current mining towns interventions emphasise human settlements development ahead of economic development. In essence, the mining towns intervention programme has overtaken other important sectoral issues such as economic development (Marais, 2013a). Carson *et al*, (2016), notes crucially that not only does planning for resource dependent areas usually occurs after decline or when abandonment has taken place but that such planning usually takes the form of buttressing such activities that are already in decline, rather than introduce alternative activities.

As Lenka *et al* (Undated) argue that there are a number of economic reasons that hinder the Mining Towns Programme: Firstly, it has not differentiated the towns, nor sought to understand the nature and extent of investment that makes sense for each specific town (Lenka *et al*, Undated).²⁷ The push for home-ownership, through the Mining Charter, assumes that all mining towns have similar development

²⁷ L. Marais, personal communication, August 28, 2017

requirements.²⁸ Secondly, increasing new development in the times of growth, coupled with the emphasis on home-ownership, has serious implications when mines close, as this locks the migrant labour population into areas that are facing decline (Marais and Cloete, 2013, 2009; Smith, 2015). Lastly, the isolated planning and development of mine infrastructure, coupled with the decline and subsequent closure of mines, leads to the abandonment of valuable assets that are not properly integrated within broader municipal planning (Lenka *et al*, Undated). In the end, these assets are left derelict and not available to support other socioeconomic functions in the municipal area.

One major area that the programme has ignored is to comprehensively assess the current housing conditions in these mining regions. There may be mining town regions where there is a healthy level of mining induced investments and economic activities; however, the same area may not exhibit or hold potential for housing investment that supports private market transactional activity, such as Burgersfort (Limpopo), where traditional land-ownership system is rife. Interestingly, what emerges out of these areas is another kind of market system – small-scale local landlords providing either a rental unit or space for a rental unit that the tenant provides.²⁹ The implication is twofold: firstly, the employer and the unions lose spatial control of the labour force, and secondly and more positively, it integrates the miner community into the greater community structure, and promotes small-scale rental markets.

3.3. HOUSING FINANCE AND LIMITED SUPPLY-SIDE INSTRUMENTS

Historically, the private sector has not been enthusiastic about investing in housing in mining towns in South Africa, although there are exceptions.³⁰ Where investment has taken place, it tends to be outside mine operation areas and in towns that were already fairly well-established with a functioning property market, for example Rustenburg, Brits, the Gauteng Westrand region, etc (see Bryceson and Jøhnson, 2017; Tons and Taylor, 2010). The obligation of providing accommodation was

²⁸ See section on institutional weaknesses and shortcomings.

²⁹ M. Nel, personal communication, July 22, 2017

³⁰ L. Marais, personal communication, August 28, 2017

historically carried by the mining companies and this responsibility has grown even bigger with the emergence of the post-1994 dispensation.

By implication, this has created conditions in which demand is mainly addressed by the limited formal supply from the mines, and with the informal rental market playing an ever increasing role. However, there are other reasons for this. Firstly, miners' earnings are too low to afford housing provided through bond markets in well-established property markets locations. Secondly, the instability and job-security challenges of the industry require substantial risk-taking on the part of the financial institutions, especially in a market that is poorly diversified. Thirdly, miners do not qualify for the majority of the publicly-provided housing, as they earn too much for most subsidies. Lastly, because of these gaps, the mining industry offers generous housing subsidies that have created uncompetitive housing markets in these areas.³¹ An exception is the small-scale rental market. A recent survey conducted in the Marikana sub-region has found that an overwhelming 75% of mine employees reside in rental accommodation, of which 37% is sourced from informal rental.

3.3.1. Affordability and Indebtedness

A lack of affordability and high debt levels for mine employees is one of the biggest challenges for the mining industry towards adequately housing mineworkers, which influences the nature of intervention for housing options in these regions. According to a survey conducted by one of the major mining companies in the platinum belt in the North West Province, nearly 64% of its total labour force was found to be credit-unworthy, and a further 27% could not afford private-sector housing (Shisaka, 2017). By implication, this section of the labour force either has to be accommodated elsewhere or, if the choice exists, need to be rehabilitated into the housing market. This undermines and limits the diversity of the housing market (Marais and Wessels, 2005; Marais and Venter, 2006).

³¹ Most mining companies provide rental subsidies to their employees that are somewhat lower than market costs, in the process stunting any potential participation in the market (M. Narsoo, personal communication, June 22, 2017).

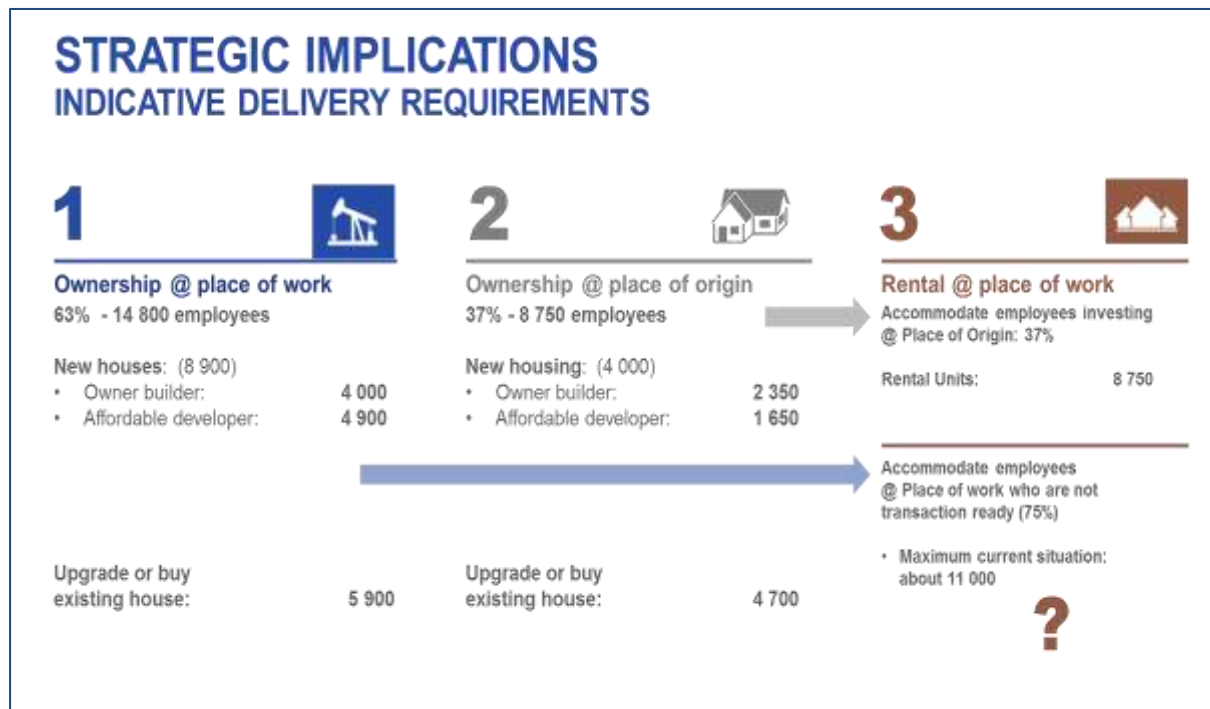
3.4. SOCIOECONOMIC DYNAMICS

Mining towns are driven by migration patterns. These patterns contribute to current socioeconomic conditions of mining towns, such as change and dynamics of human settlements conditions in terms of growth and decline as well as form and patterns. Therefore, these dynamics should be understood in terms of their influence on the overall housing and human settlements conditions.

3.4.1. Mining and Migration

Migration has fuelled the mining industry for centuries, creating development patterns that are important to consider when human settlements interventions are designed in mining towns. According to Marais and Wessels (2005), the migratory nature of mine labour has serious implications for human settlement delivery models, especially in times of decline, yet there is little analysis on the demographic legacies of resource based developments (Carson *et al*, 2016). For example, between 1991 and 2005, historical mining regions such as the Free State goldfields saw a sharp decline in its working population, coinciding with the decline in gold production and mine closures (Marais and Cloete, 2009; Nel and Binns, 2001). Over this period, mineworkers were moving to the newly-expanding platinum belt in the North-West province. Impacts on human settlements were severe: infrastructure was left unused, abandoned and under-maintained, the condition of housing assets declined, and there was a decline in demand within the housing market (Marais and Cloete, 2013, 2009).

Figure 5: Employee survey on home ownership preferences and aspirations



Source: Shisaka, 2017

In the above figure, employees were asked to state their preference for housing between their place of work and place of origin. Nearly 15 000 (63%) of employees indicated their desire to own a house in their place of work, while nearly 9000 (37%) expressed a desire to own a house at their place of origin. These numbers demonstrate that a deeper understanding is required to properly design the kind of intervention that is appropriate for mining towns. The numbers further demonstrate that while mine employees may be well-established and probably even have families in these regions, there is still a strong link with their places of origins, so much so that the employees regard these areas as the places where they want to make meaningful and long term investments in the form of a house (Bryceson and Jøhnson, 2017, 2010; Bryceson and Mackinnon, 2012; Carson *et al*, 2016; Laburn-Pear, 1992; Marais and Cloete, 2009; Republic of South Africa, 2005; Chamber of Mines, 2016).

Furthermore, the above data demonstrates that 37% of housing investments will have to go towards rental housing (see Marais and Venter, 2006). It is also important to note that according to the same survey, 75% of the surveyed labour force have indicated that their current accommodation status is that of rental, with 37% of that in

informal rental. This demonstrates that rentals may be one of the more viable housing options in mining towns, especially small-scale rental (Marais and Cloete, 2013; Cloete, Marais and Venter, 2009; Shisaka, 2017).

3.4.2. Changing Household Structure and Implications for Housing in Mining Towns

Building on the preceding paragraph, there is an acceptance that the South African household structure is changing. According to statistics, the number of single persons living in shacks rose from 24% to 38% between 2001 and 2011. This is a significant increase and has implications for housing, especially in mining towns.

According to the IES 38% of one-person households living in shacks.....regularly send remittances to others living outside their household.

(The Housing Development Agency, 2013, p. 29)

These changes are in line with the mining and migratory patterns and characteristics and resource boom periods (Carson *et al*, 2016). It is these kinds of undercurrents, coupled with historical migrant labour practices that the mining sector and the government should take into account in this intervention programme. This data is important in a number of ways. It explains labour trends and their linkages to household structures and need, household preferences, aspirations to housing and also suggests that a far deeper analysis is required to arrive at the choices and housing delivery instruments that could be put in place to meet these needs.

3.4.3. The Role of the Living Out Allowance (LOA)

The LOA was introduced in the 1990s to give migrant workers the option not to live in hostels. The story of LOA is sufficiently summarised by the Chamber of Mines as follows:

Prior to the advent of the Mining Charter, the mining industry had agreed to a demand by the National Union of Mineworkers to provide a living out

allowance (LOA) to hostel dwellers who opted to seek accommodation off mine property. The purpose of the LOA is to give employees an additional choice of residence, with the LOA intended to be used to support rental payment and board. The amount of the allowance (a minimum of R 2,000 since September 2014) was directly related to hostel board and lodging costs and intended to support an equivalent standard of food and accommodation. The LOA has increased annually, often ahead of inflation, since it first came into effect.

Many employees choose to receive a LOA and they choose to apply it differently as they are entitled to do. Diverse people make diverse decisions. However, the LOA has unfortunately given rise to unintended social issues. One of the critical social issues is that the LOA has not necessarily been used for its intended purposes. Instead the funds are used to supplement the money sent by employees to their families in their rural homes or used for other spending and debt. It has been suggested that a stakeholder review of the LOA and its unintended negative consequences is essential.

Rapid growth in the South African platinum mining industry from the mid-1990s until 2008, resulted in the development of sizeable, impoverished informal settlements close to the platinum mines. There are fewer hostels and the majority of employees receive LOAs. This was a focus of instability and unrest during the 2014 platinum industry strikes. In the gold sector some 50-60% of employees have voluntarily elected to remain in company hostel accommodation and, as a result, there have been fewer sizeable informal settlements close to the mines.

(Chamber of Mines, 2016, p. 2)

While the allowance had positive aspects and enabled mine workers to leave the hostel system, it did not take account of whether there was adequate alternative housing in the vicinity of the mine where they could find

accommodation. In many cases, the lack of alternatives has led to mineworkers living in informal settlements and in some cases to the growth of such settlements and backyard shacks (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2011). It is clear that the LOA scheme did not envisage a way in which mineworker community will progressively be integrated within and around the existing host communities. As noted by Mnwana, the growth of informal settlements and invasion of tribal lands by ex-hostel dwellers has also created tensions with local tribes (Mnwana, 2015; Capps and Mnwana, 2015).

Additionally, prior to establishment of the LOA, no clear effort was made to properly define what kind rental accommodation would meet the minimum requirement for this kind of subsidy and therefore it was open for any form of accommodation (i.e. infrastructure requirements, nature of the unit, size, furnishes etc. (see Amnesty International, 2016).

3.4.4. Too Rich to Qualify for a Subsidy House

State intervention in mining towns is predicated on the idea that a holistic approach is required wherein majority of mineworkers and the surrounding communities are provided with access to basic services. In the medium to long term, housing development will occur through public housing, private sector and owner-builder initiatives. As has been shown above, private sector supply/demand-side constraints range from a lack of affordability of bonded houses to indebtedness of the mineworkers. In the public sector, mineworkers do not qualify for the majority of housing subsidies, with the exception of the Finance Linked Subsidy Programme (FLISP).³² FLISP too has hardly been explored, due to lack of clarity on proposed partnerships between the government and mining companies. In this instance, it is useful to provide a quick review of some of the public housing programmes and how these fare within the context of mining towns:

³² According to one of the senior government official, there is an attempt to introduce a specific funding instrument dispensation for mining towns (Mining Towns Partnerships Meeting, 2017)

a. Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP)

The IRDP provides for the planning and development of integrated housing projects. These projects are aimed at developing holistic and integrated settlements where different housing typologies and opportunities are realised i.e. social and rental housing. These are envisaged to incorporate institutional uses such as communal facilities and commercial sites. The IRDP also makes enables the provision of serviced sites for purchase by those potential beneficiaries that may not be able to qualify for free or other types of housing products in the development. This is achieved through the phasing of the development where the first phase deals with land, planning, proclamation of the township as well as the servicing of the development. The second phase deals with the construction of houses for qualifying housing subsidy beneficiaries and the sale of serviced stands to non-qualifying beneficiaries (Socioeconomic Rights Institute, 2011; Republic of South Africa, 2010).

Amongst a number of state subsidy programmes, the IRDP promises to provide far greater opportunities for mineworkers who earn too high to qualify for most of the state subsidy programmes. This is especially true in those instances where mining companies are willing to partner with the government in the delivery of integrated housing projects in mining areas. The current partnership models envisage an approach where mining companies will make development contributions through land, infrastructure and technical capacity in return for allocation of certain number of serviced sites for mineworkers to purchase from the development.³³

b. Full Subsidy Housing

This is a housing subsidy that is aimed at addressing the lack of housing for the poor or the most bottom end of the housing market, where the bulk of housing backlog exist. The qualifying criteria for this housing subsidy are people who earn less R 3500 a month. It is a well-known fact that mine workers do not qualify for this kind of housing subsidy. The beneficiaries of this state led housing subsidy projects in mining towns are not those employed directly in the mines. This, in turn has perpetuated the spatial enclaves so deeply entrenched in the mining areas.

³³ The Department of Human Settlements is in the process of drafting the IRDP directive and guidelines for partnerships arrangements with mining companies.

c. Community Residential Units (CRU)

The CRU programme is borne out of the fact that there is significant number of people who are renting what is largely overcrowded and substandard accommodation. The programme aims to provide affordable rental accommodation to those with low household income. However, the CRU programme is focused on the public hostels that are either owned by the municipalities or provinces. In certain instances, hostels that have both public and private ownership due to historical reasons are also considered (Socioeconomic Rights Institute, 2011; Republic of South Africa, 2010). Having regard to the fact that government has largely not played a role in mine housing and the hostels in these areas, it is clear that this programme does not cover mine hostels.

d. Social Housing Programme (SHP)

Apart from the provision of affordable rental accommodation, the other aim of SHP is to promote the development of more efficient cities, towns and regions. It aims to do this through spatial restructuring by integrating previously excluded groups into the city. One way of achieving this is the promotion of densification by providing housing products that enhance flexibility and mobility. Rental housing is seen as one such option (Socioeconomic Rights Institute, 2011). Areas that are recipients of social housing must be declared restructuring zones³⁴ and these include majority of the current selected mining towns. To date, there are a number of social housing projects that have taken place within the boundaries of local municipalities designated as mining towns, but none linked to mining towns areas per se.

In this case, it is useful to provide a brief account and experience of one of the recent government led social housing project in a mining area. In the aftermath of the Marikana shooting, government, together with Lonmin mining company, hastily planned a social housing rental project on the land that was previously owned and designated for housing by Lonmin in Marikana. The land was transferred to the government for the development of housing for both the mining employees and

³⁴ Restructuring zone means geographic area which has been identified by the municipality, with the concurrence of the provincial government, for the purposes of social housing and designated by the minister in the gazette for approved projects (Republic of South Africa, 2008)

members of community. The first phase involved the development of rental apartments for those that may not qualify for full housing subsidies, majority of whom were miners. After the completion of the rental units, a Social Housing Institution (SHI) was appointed for the management of the rental stock. Upon setting of monthly rents, miners refused to agree to the proposed rentals because the proposed rents exceed those that they pay in mine-provided rental stock. This is the consequence of high rental subsidies that mines provide to their employees. From 2014 to date, the social housing rental apartments remain vacant. Miners have threatened violence to anyone who will occupy those apartments if their demands are not met.

In the light of the above experience, it is appropriate to question and review the role and impact of mine housing subsidies in the entire housing market, especially if the government is to play a role in mining areas. It is also important for government to look holistically at the housing problems in mining areas as opposed to designate the problem between mine employees and none employees, especially where instruments exist to deliver housing benefits across the board. The isolated approach of designating benefits according to a particular status has created resentment from the mineworkers.

e. Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP)

The Department of Human Settlements considers UISP as one of the most important programmes of government which seeks to upgrade the living conditions of millions of poor people by providing secure tenure and access to basic services and housing (Republic of South Africa, 2015c). It is therefore not surprising that in this current MTSF, upgrading of informal settlements constitute nearly 50% of the proposed delivery target. This appears to be in line and same thinking with the original intentions of the mining towns programme. The reality however, insofar as upgrading implementation is concerned is different.

According to the official figures, there are 356 informal settlements in the designated mining towns. The first phase work relating to assessments, categorisation, enumerations and feasibility studies have been conducted on most these informal settlements. Most of this work was completed soon after the mining towns

programme was announced. As per the original intentions of the mining towns programme, the intention was that most of the efforts from the human settlements sector will be directed towards informal settlements and incrementally address the challenges identified. However, the interventions from human settlements have simply been directed towards new greenfield projects and departing from the stated intentions. In the end, and as has been the case with UISP, beneficiaries have simply been relocated from informal settlements to new greenfield projects (Socioeconomic Rights Institute, 2011).

Figure 6: Informal Settlements in Mining Towns

Province & Municipality	Stage of ISU Planning work				Categorisation of Informal Settlements			
	Total Number of Informal Settlements within Municipality	Assessment & Categorisation	Social Facilitation & Enumeration	Technical Upgrading/ Prefeasibility Studies	A	B1	B2	C
North West								
Rustenburg	24	X	X	X	1	16	4	3
Madibeng	31	X	X	X	10	14	4	3
Moses Kotane	4	X	X	X	1	2	1	0
Kgetlengrivier	9	X		X	6	3	0	0
Matlosana	4	X	X	X	2	0	0	2
Free State								
Matjhabeng	21	X	X		4	0	0	17
Moghaka	5	X	X		0	0	0	5
Limpopo								
Fetakgomo Greate Tubatse	8	X		X	3	3	0	2
Elias Motsoaledi	4	X		X	0	3	0	1
Thabazimbi	5	X	X	X	1	1	0	2
Lephalale	3	X		X	1	0	1	1
Mpumalanga								
Emalahleni	71	X	X	X	12	38	7	14
Steve Tshwete	16	X		X	1	7	8	0
Thaba Chweu	10	X	X	X	0	8	2	0
Gauteng								
Rand West	18	X		X	1	0	16	1
Mogale City	89	X	X	X	12	5	4	68
Merafong	9	X		X	1	0	7	1
Northern Cape								
Gamagara	4	X			0	4	0	0
Tantsabane	12	X	X		0	5	4	3
Ga-Segonyana	7	X			0	7	0	0
Kgatelopele	2	X	X	X	0	2	0	1
Totals	356				56	118	58	124

Source: The Housing Development Agency, 2017b

To understand this practice clearly, there are number of reasons that need to be provided. First, majority of designated mining towns are located in areas where tribal land ownership is prevalent. By extension, most of the informal settlements identified are located on tribal land. These conditions take away the incentive for government planners to enter into possible protracted negotiations with tribal institutions for the

upgrading of the identified settlements³⁵. Second, even in instances where authorities attempt to upgrade the identified informal settlements, there are other technical challenges such as high densities of informal settlements, geotechnical and other environmental problems that are often raised. These conditions almost inevitably lead to choice between upgrading or relocate beneficiaries to other projects nearby. Third, the poor capacity of local governments to roll out basic services undermines the objectives of upgrading of informal settlements and by extension the mining towns programme.

f. Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP)

The FLISP housing subsidy is aimed at assisting the first time home buyers who earn between R 3500 and R 15 000 per month. The subsidy can also be used to purchase a serviced site created through the IRDP development. The subsidy aims to reduce the initial home loan amount for potential home buyers who have secured mortgage loan from home loan providers. On paper, the programme appears relevant to resolve some of the housing challenges in mining areas, especially if the objective of promoting home ownership is taken into account. However, some of the experts in the field and a housing manager in the mining company have noted some important challenges with the FLISP model in mining towns.

One is that it is linked to mortgage finance and this implies that the housing product has to be developer driven. The limitation with this is that the viability of housing market is extremely limited in many areas where mining is taking place. Such markets tend to exist in nearby towns that are already well established as noted earlier. Unless the developers and lenders secure the backing and loan guarantees from the employers, it has proven difficult to create a viable market for FLISP in these areas³⁶. Second, the capping of R 15 000 has been overtaken by other events such as the changing and rising incomes of miners as result of the 2012 strike and Marikana events. As a result, miners earn more than the original set limit of R 15 000 and therefore do not qualify for FLISP even if such option was available. It is

³⁵ M. Nel, personal communication, July 22, 2017

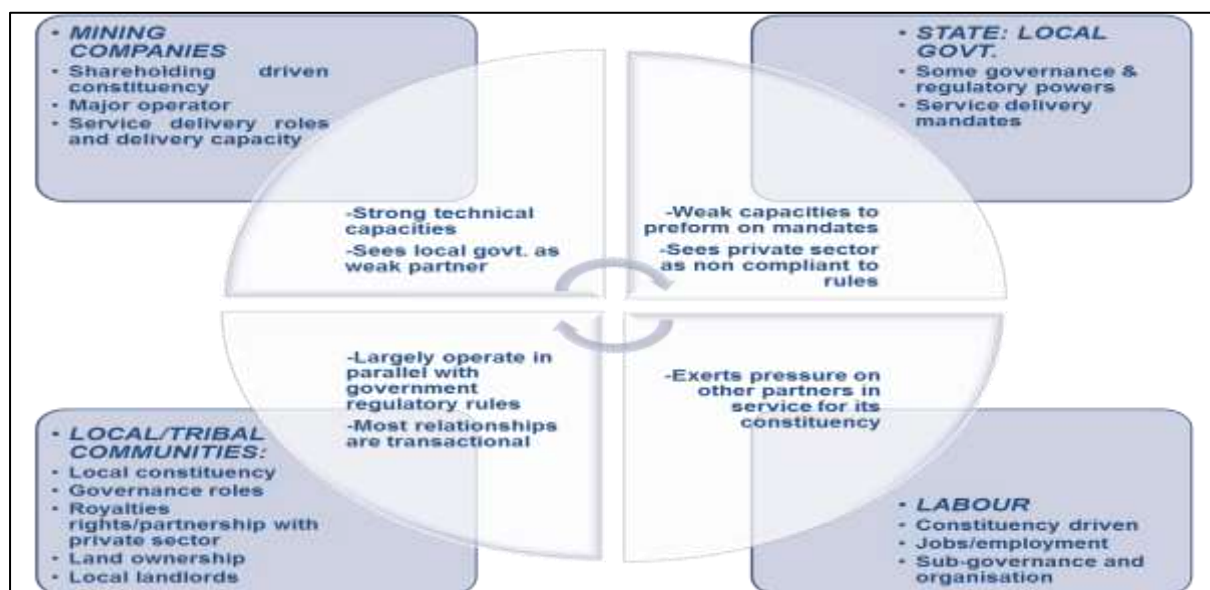
³⁶ M. Nel, personal communication, July 22, 2017

important to note that at the time of writing this research, the Department of Human Settlements was considering a policy change to increase the subsidy bands.

3.5. INSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESSES AND SHORTCOMINGS

Here we review how institutional weaknesses might have contributed the challenges faced by the mining towns interventions.

Figure 7: Complex institutional and power arrangements in mining towns



Source: Author's own work

At a broader conceptual level, the mining regions are comprised of four categories of institutional actors, namely:

- State/Local government, as governing authority
- Mining companies, as the major investor and economic role player
- Local and tribal institutions who have rights to the land
- Communities and labour

The character, nature and extent of these relationships are outlined in figure 7above.

3.5.1. Lack of Policy Cohesion and Misalignment

Section 100 of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002, (MPRDA) requires that:

- a. The minister of mineral resources, and after consultation with the minister for housing, develops a housing and living conditions standard for the minerals industry; and
- b. Develop a code of good practice for the minerals in the republic.

(Republic of South Africa, 2002, p. 84).

It is now almost 17 years since the Act came into force and these provisions have not been met to the degree envisaged by the authors.³⁷ As a result, government has sought to intervene in mining towns with no clear policy position. Consequently, various private-sector players have offered different models for housing delivery, as required of them in terms of the law and the Mining Charter. Failure to fulfil the provisions of section 100 of the MPRDA, and multiple engagements with different mining companies with their different models, has illustrated the inability of the government to determine what constitute good practice.³⁸ One of the experts in the field has remarked that part of the challenge with mining towns intervention is that the role players have disparate view of the problem, and that different parties (e.g. local government and the mining companies) each believe the other is not doing enough to deliver on their stated legal mandates. Moreover, and most significantly, the Department of Mineral Resources, as the regulatory authority for the sector, is pushing for 'home ownership' in mining towns, almost to the detriment of all alternatives.

This is problematic because for 'home ownership' to take place, there has to be a transaction based on firm commitments and rational choices exercised by miners whose circumstances are largely intertwined with those of the precarious

³⁷ The MPRDA was passed in 2002. It is only from the beginning of August 2017 that the drafting teams from the department of human settlements and minerals started to meet and draft these standards. Up to now, no final decision has been taken on the current drafts emanating from these two departments.

³⁸ Different companies have offered different models; however, there is no clear process through which a proposed model is deemed appropriate and good practice. There are also concerns that some companies may form partnerships with government despite their proposals being weak, since there is no clear policy.

employment conditions in which they work. Coupled with this is the continuous and firm commitment by miners to make housing investments in their place of origin, and other factors which play an important role in arriving at the kinds of delivery systems appropriate for mining towns regions. One further observation is that legally, there is nothing fundamentally problematic with the Charter; however, the interpretation of it is that it promotes the notion of 'home ownership' over and above all other options. It is important to note though that although the Charter does make progressive provisions to empower miners to make choices around investments, these don't seem to be keenly pursued.

3.5.2. Lack of Clarity on Delivery Partnerships

As outlined in the Chapter 2, the national Mining Towns Programme was predicated on the idea that the programme will be implemented in partnership between the government and the private sector (mining companies). However, the idea lacked details on how partnerships were going to be formed and what the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the parties would be. In the end, there was no framework that defined the relationship between government and the private sector, and it remained unclear as to what the priorities were and how they were going to be carried through to programme implementation. Even in instances where some progress was made on partnerships, these efforts were undermined by different and often contradictory interpretation of what the programme entailed, a clear policy gap at all levels. Moreover, local government, as one of the most important partners in the process, lacks the kind of sophisticated capacity required to deliver on this mandate. As Hamman (2004) notes, local government lack requisite capacity to drive partnerships with mining companies and subsequently, it is mining companies that dominate such arrangements.

The intervention for Mining Towns Programme is predicated on three distinct areas of focus:

- a. Development of a project pipeline for project planning and implementation
- b. Fast-track existing projects in mining towns
- c. Form private-sector partnerships for joint programme implementation

Consequently, the process remains unpredictable, unstructured and no partnerships have been achieved. Because of this lack of structure, the process has bypassed some of the well-pronounced state policy positions, such as those contained in the social housing policy on partnerships. Social housing policy requires partnering with the private sector; however, this is clearly lost in the current approaches with the mining companies, who themselves are heavily investing in rental housing in these regions (Ashira Consulting, 2007; Cloete, Marais and Venter, 2009)

3.5.3. Divergent Paths Across Sector Players

The focus on mining towns reveals some of the sharp contrast between policy, policy application and policy approaches across different government departments. This is made clear by the interpretation of the instruments such as the Mining Charter, the Social and Labour Plans (SLPs)³⁹, led by the Department of Mineral Resources on the one hand and the delivery instruments and approaches from the Department of Human Settlements on the other (Cloete, Marais and Venter, 2009).

Human settlements delivery is linked to municipal planning, whereas the SLPs run by the Department of Mineral Resources are not. This means that the focus on delivery and other priorities are not the same between government and mining companies (Centre for Applied Legal Studies, 2015; Lenka *et al.* 2017b). The Mining Towns Programme and its focus on improving living conditions mean different things to different sectors. To the Department of Human Settlements it should imply a steady improvements and a progressive expansion of services to communities. On the other hand, the obligations of mining companies in terms of the Mining Charter are different. This means the Department of Mineral Resources requires urgent delivery of housing by the mining companies. However, the urgency of the Department of Mineral Resources and the requirements of the Mining Charter are

³⁹ When a mining company applies for a mining right, it is required to submit a number of documents, which demonstrates whether the potential mine is viable or not. One of these plans is the SLP. The SLP sets out how the company intends to share some of the benefits that flow from the mine including skills development, development of social infrastructure such as schools and clinics, housing etc. (Centre for Applied Legal Studies, 2015)

fairly understandable given the historical and ongoing lack of home ownership by miners in South Africa (Marais, Undated).

The above situation has resulted in a number of problems. Firstly, it rules out any potential partnership arrangement for a collaborative approach to human settlement. Secondly, it undermines the stated goals of integrated planning (see Marais and Venter, 2006), spatial planning and efficient urban management in that new, often unregulated and un-proclaimed housing schemes develop in areas and spaces where local government has no means of discharging its governance duties, notwithstanding the calls in the Mining Charter to consolidate and integrate existing settlements (Republic of South Africa, 2002). By contrast, it is only in times of downscaling that mining companies are willing to open up this infrastructure for broader community needs (Marais, 2013b). Lastly, any new proposed forms of partnerships will have to be concluded outside these historical practices, with serious policy shifts required in the Departments of Mineral Resources and Human Settlements to properly articulate what the overall delivery outcomes for Mining Towns Programme ought to be.

3.5.4. What's In a Name? Is It Really Houses for Miners?

Our brothers who were killed on 16 August 2012 paid for those houses with their blood.....These are our blood we are not going anywhere.

(aMabungane, 2016, para 5 and 6)

At one level, there is a tacit conversation around whether government really intends to deliver houses for miners or not; however, this does not help encourage reflection on the kinds of opportunities that can be realised with a real commitment to improving living conditions within the context of informal settlement upgrade programmes.⁴⁰ As a result, miners feel that this intervention does not address their living conditions in a way originally envisaged when the programme was introduced.

Politically, the government has resolved to improve the living conditions of mineworkers. However, there are also conflicting messages around whether

⁴⁰ M. Nel, personal communication, July 24, 2017

government actually intends to build houses for mineworkers. Part of the confusion is the fact that the mining industry is one of those few industries that, as part of regulatory licencing and legal requirements, is required to provide accommodation for its own employees; however, this arrangement has not completely reduced the role of the state in providing housing in these areas, hence the different interpretations.

3.5.5. Capacity Constraints, Infrastructure Conflicts and Outsourcing of State Functions

One of the key issues in many mining towns is that there is a simmering problem around bulk infrastructure supply. Because local government lacks capacity to deliver bulk infrastructure, mining companies have supplied their own, creating complexities around urban governance, spatial planning and service delivery mandates (see Marais and Venter, 2006). This situation has resulted in instances where there is no relationship between the mining companies and local government, with the result that municipalities are unable to perform any meaningful planning or governance role, and mining companies continue to do more to meet their needs.

The programme aims to improve living conditions through basic service delivery; such as improving access to water, sanitation, etc. However, it is these mandates that local government has struggled with to date, particularly in the ever-increasing informal settlements around the mining areas. In contrast, it is mainly mining companies that possess the kinds of capacity required to achieve this goal.⁴¹ Ideally, it is these realities that should encourage the partnerships between the government, mining companies, labour and the local communities.

While a considerable number of mine employees reside in the sprawling informal settlements and backyard accommodations where the mines could roll out new infrastructures and improve their conditions in situ, the following challenges hinder this prospect:

⁴¹ In the mining regions, some mining companies are reputed to own massive bulk infrastructure capacities that far exceed those in the management of local authorities, thereby possessing the ability to shape urban development patterns, especially through private housing schemes that require little, if any, regulatory permissions from local government (L. Marais, personal communication, August 28, 2017)

- a. **Location of informal settlements:** Some of the informal settlements are located in tribally-held land where mining companies are reluctant to extend the kinds of asset investment decisions required.
- b. **Regulatory factors:** Mining companies are largely measured by the number of housing units they have provided to their employees as opposed to how they have improved the living conditions of their employees through schemes such as access to sanitation, etc. This suggests that mining companies could be expected to deliver on housing as they do, allowing government to focus on improving living conditions. However, in reality they are less capable of doing so, as they lack the fundamental building blocks such as bulk infrastructure.

The above situation has continued to result in the repetition of the typical mining town tragedy, where uncertainty between the mining companies and municipalities persists over who should be held accountable for the provision of basic services in mining areas. The victims, in the form of host communities and miners, are largely unable to hold any party accountable, neither for their immediate needs nor for long-term investments that guarantee certain levels of service (Centre for Applied Legal Studies, 2016).

3.6. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I have attempted to outline a number of potential problems that militates against the Mining Towns Programme. These problems are grouped into three distinct areas; institutional, social and economic limitations. Firstly, the quest for housing delivery seems to have overtaken the considerations around the economic health and long term prosperity of mining towns. The mining companies are better able to react to the cycle of economic boom-and-bust, whereas government has not demonstrated that it possess both capacity and knowledge of the complex economic architecture of mining towns.

Secondly, there are a number of social dynamics and political forces that drive these areas, forces that are largely ignored in the planning and conceptualisation of

programmes such as the Mining Towns Programme. These forces range from such complex issues as migration, mobility and quasi-governance systems that are shared between state, mining companies, labour and traditional authorities, each with a claim for the space whose boundaries remain opaque and not universally understood and with multiple meanings for all the players.

Thirdly, at the institutional level, poor alignment between the stated ambitions of improving living conditions and the propensity to “delivering houses” has undermined the programme. Moreover, even if the intention was about the delivery of houses, the programme would have failed to achieve its mandate in that it excludes the mineworkers. Coupled with this is the fundamental weakness of local government to effectively implement the programme.

In the next Chapter, I reflect on the Mining Towns Programme and the underlying challenges undermining its effectiveness. I will provide a set of recommendations to consider in the formulation and conceptualisation of the programme, and, finally, draw the overall conclusions.

CHAPTER 4: OVERALL REFLECTIONS, ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The Mining Towns Programme is already at the halfway mark of the current Medium Term Strategic Framework as set out by the government. However, it has been clear from the outset that although the programme sought to resolve the challenges of mining towns through a nationally-driven initiative, there are a number of economic, social and institutional challenges that were not properly considered, and these have had negative impact on the efficacy of the programme. At the broader level, however, there are a number of issues that are worth critically reflecting on.

One indisputable point is that the state has a moral and legal duty to intervene in the mining towns, especially after the Marikana event of 2012. The intervention was however undermined by the state's inexperience due to its long absence from the affairs of mining towns, the limitations of its own instruments, the underlying institutional weaknesses and roles, and the existing socioeconomic challenges in these areas. There is an argument that state intervention is not only right in terms of resolving the current challenges, but also for developing a framework for the future of mining towns. In this final chapter, I reflect on the underlying challenges undermining the effectivity of the programme and, finally, I provide some alternative recommendations which should have been considered at the conception stage of the programme.

4.2. REFLECTIONS OF THE CHALLENGES OF MINING TOWNS

The Mining Towns Programme was founded and predicated on the idea of improving socioeconomic conditions, which subsequently found a different meaning within the context of human settlements development. The broad goal of improving the socioeconomic conditions of mining towns needs to be looked at in terms of local government service-delivery mandates. What is outlined is hardly different from the functions of local government. "If you give more support to local government in terms of its service delivery mandates on rolling out basic services, you will probably get it

right” (M. Narsoo, personal communication, June 22, 2017). As a result, attention should have been directed at the capacities of local government to fulfil these obligations and mandates. In the absence of a mechanism by which the Mining Towns Programme could enable local government to increase its capacity to fast-track service delivery in terms of water, sanitation, etc., the chances of success of the programme were limited. In the end, it is clear that the programme was located in the wrong place and this enabled it to depart from its intended focus area.

Reflections on the mining towns have to look at the extent of the role of the government both pre- and post-1994. I have attempted to show that the government’s hands-off approach to the affairs of mining towns has undermined its current intervention. This hands-off approach is evident both before and after 1994. With a diminished role and a poor contextual grasp of the challenges, government was unable to properly frame an effective response to the mining towns problems. To this end, while government wishes for the development of more inclusive and integrated settlements and broad socioeconomic improvements in living conditions, it lacks basic capacities such as the infrastructure to support these ideas, mainly due to historical underinvestment in these areas. To date, such investments have always been undertaken by the mining companies to support their operations. In the end, the broad and ambitious goal of socioeconomic improvement is left unrealised and unachievable.

The role of the existing human settlements delivery instruments cannot be overlooked in the assessment of the programme. There are two distinct challenges with the delivery instruments. Firstly, the instruments are geared towards the delivery of housing and not on the broad socioeconomic mandates as outlined in the programme. This is what enables intervention from the human settlements to assume a usual role of mere delivery of houses. Secondly, even if the approach was strictly confined to the delivery of houses only, there are limitations to what the current delivery instruments can deliver, in that they exclude the majority of the mine labour due to subsidy rules and qualifying criteria.

Added to the programme were the partnership arrangements between the government and the mining companies. This requirement was rushed and scantily defined, and needed to be unpacked further given the disparate historical legacies of

the two institutions. For example, mining companies have always planned, built and operated infrastructure projects to suit their immediate needs with little-to-no state participation in the process. To build effective partnerships, the government needed to take over some of these operations.

However, the government neither had capacity, expertise nor resources to effectively engage in this process. In the end, both the government and the mining companies have simply continued to follow their orthodox approaches to human settlements challenges and housing, leaving the goals of broad socioeconomic improvements unattainable. The role assigned to the HDA, of programme management and implementation but without direct accountability over resources and implementation did not assist the implementation of the programme.

The national Mining Towns Programme kicked off with the development of a diagnostics report on mining towns. This report detailed the conditions of identified mining towns and attempted to differentiate each mining town based on various development conditions, i.e. housing investments, local government capacity, the role of each town within the larger geographic area, etc. This work is to date the clearest attempt to do away with the one-size-fits-all approach to mining towns. However, this was not followed through, and almost all the subsequent work ignored this approach. In short, there remain gaps which undermine the interventions currently being implemented. This can be seen through the poor articulation of the problem statement and the strategic choices in reporting on and reviewing the programme so far.⁴²

The Mining Towns Programme is also based on the idea that all the national sector departments will play their roles in improving the existing conditions of mining towns, including driving the economic revolution and diversification of these areas. However, as Lenka *et al* (2017b) and Marais (2013a), have contended, there is little evidence demonstrating that any mining town in South Africa has been successfully developed to survive beyond mining misfortunes, and the current approaches also seem vulnerable to this criticism. So far, the review process has not demonstrated that any meaningful economic investments have taken place in mining towns, with

⁴² The programme is currently undergoing national performance review. Majority of these reviews have found that there is poor articulation and link between current investments and the basis of these investments (Internal Mining Towns Review Meeting (2017b)).

the risk that housing investments may outstrip economic investments (National Treasury Programme Notes, 2016).

Socially, factors such as migration and changing household structures are prevalent. These have had an impact in the character of mining towns, and should have consequently influenced the interventions more meaningfully. This relates to the need for in-depth analysis and contextual assessment of the migratory patterns, demographics and the consequent impact on human settlements conditions in mining towns. It is not clear how these were factored into the programme, especially as it relates to the nature, scale and intervention options in the overall housing conditions.

4.3. ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO MINING TOWNS

Having reflected on the general weaknesses of the approach to Mining Towns Programme, I close with a proposal for some alternatives that should be considered for the programme. In order to build on the theme of improving the socioeconomic conditions of mining towns, the programme should increase the pace of informal settlements upgrading and the delivery of small-scale rental alternatives. It is important to state upfront that the human settlements and housing challenges in mining towns cannot be addressed by single-sector delivery given the dynamic character of these regions. With increased focus on informal settlements, there is a good prospect of properly addressing the socioeconomic problems in mining towns. This presents a real opportunity for a break away from single sector delivery arrangements, which have not greatly assisted in improving the living conditions in mining towns. The new and often isolated mediums to large-scale housing schemes either have nothing to do with the existing community, or do not advance much-needed progressive spatial reforms in these areas (Bezuidenhout and Buhlungu, 2015).

However, due to their size, it is important to note that these new large-scale housing schemes have the potential to alter a mining town's landscape. They also serve to cast the mining companies in a more positive light in terms of fulfilling their obligations, as set out in the Mining Charter and their licensing conditions. An alternative approach in the form of informal settlement upgrade and small scale

rental is required. This approach does not seek to replace the current efforts, but locate the intentions and meaning of the Mining Towns Programme within its original goal without absolving the mining companies of their legal obligations. This approach also recognises that in doing so, the programme will properly be located within the contextual delivery mandates of local government.

4.3.1. The Rising Tide of Informal and Small-Scale Rental

In the previous section, I have outlined some of the constraints and limitations for human settlements interventions in mining towns, i.e. affordability, a limited market, indebtedness, lack of diversity in funding instruments, etc. Without overemphasising some of the above points, the complexities around mining towns and housing conditions call for diversified forms of solutions and response. Certainly, the current set of solutions, especially those emanating from the state, is one-sided, one-size-fits-all, and inadequate to address the housing challenges around mining towns.

Apart from the fact that they largely exclude the miners as a community group, they disempower both the mining community and the host communities in terms of individual investment choices. It is within the above context that I advocate for full-scale upgrading of informal settlements and small-scale rental as one of the options that should play a role in the housing-solution mix. This instrument exists in many localities, largely spontaneously; however it has never attracted any serious level of attention at either the policy or implementation level. On the contrary, there exists some degree of regulatory hostility towards the instrument itself, largely originating from land-use regulators and by-law enforcement (Urban Landmark, 2010; Watson, 2009).

By implication, its very survival is largely based on the fact it is mostly unregulated and exists outside the bounds of national laws and local regulations. However, as has been shown above, a significant portion of the mineworker population in the Marikina sub-region already live in backyard small rental arrangements (37%). There is a range of advantages for informal settlements upgrading and small-scale rental alternatives, and many of these fit within the context of improving socioeconomic conditions. With the upgrading of informal settlements, there is greater flexibility in accommodating the population that don't qualify for full subsidies, especially

mineworkers. With the informal settlements upgrades and the support of the Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP), mineworkers could be accommodated under 'site and service'. This means that mineworkers can access serviced sites and title, and this can enable them to build their own houses. This is also in line with the improvement of socioeconomic conditions.

The small-scale rental also needs to be understood as an option that could be appropriate to resolve some of the supply and demand challenges inherent in mining towns. I motivate below why small-scale rental, within the lens of informal settlements upgrade, is one of the appropriate means of responding to the human settlements and housing challenges in mining towns.

a. Overcoming affordability and indebtedness problems of miners

The working class conundrum is one of the long and lingering challenges (and an unintended outcome!) of South African housing policy. This group earns too much to qualify for the individual state subsidy, and too little for mortgage-financed housing schemes. There are a number of instruments that have been devised to bridge this gap; however, these have proved difficult to implement in mining regions where there is little private sector appetite to invest in housing (Chamber of Mines, 2016). As a result, mining companies have to provide subsidies and support to meet the housing needs, thereby building one of the highly subsidised housing property markets.

One of the biggest challenges confronting the mining and labour sector in South Africa is the level of indebtedness of miners, particularly those at the bottom end of the labour market (Shisaka, 2016). Mine labour employees are indebted and unable to access bonds or the other forms of loans that are a prerequisite for viable market-driven housing schemes.

In the absence of a viable and diversified housing and property market, it is important to consider other alternatives in the form of rental and the improvement of the existing services to enable owner improvement. Moreover, a rental option is affordable (Urban Landmark, 2010) and better able to facilitate the indebted miner's access to decent housing without having to satisfy the stringent requirements that would be required in the bond market.

b. Facilitating flexibility and mobility for mining employees and minimising the impact of mine closures

Herold (2001), contends that workers pursue their goals as active geographical agents making space as part of their own very real political and economic goals in ways that themselves perceive as being advantageous. Because the mining industry fluctuates according to changes in global economic conditions, mineworkers are some of the most geographically mobile and therefore "...have a different spatial agenda" (Herold, 2001, p 256). It is important to note that the rental option provides a useful strategy through which the migrants are able to save money for other, equally important, obligations such as remittances, etc. By implication this impacts on human settlements patterns and form (Greiner and Naumann, 2016).

According to Borel-Saladin and Turok, (2016, p. 16), there is a general acceptance that:

...backyard dwellings offer elements of a more sustainable approach to human settlements, one which is more responsive to the needs of the poor households. Backyards are said to be more flexible accommodation to rent; greater proximity to economic opportunities than the dormitory townships; better access to essential services and safety than informal settlement; a regular source of income to poor homeowners acting as landlords; higher residential densities, and a more compact urban form enabling more cost-effective public transport and community infrastructure.

c. Increasing economies of scale

According to the Social Housing Foundation (SHF), there is evidence that the majority of private rental-dwellers pay regular rentals as per the arrangements with their landlords. This is important in that it guarantees regular income to the landlord, and ensures that the market becomes viable. This is in contrast with the situation in informal settlements where these arrangements simply do not exist (Social Housing Foundation, 2008; Urban Landmark, 2010). It is therefore plausible that given the same conditions, miners may be willing to enter into these arrangements and pay

rentals if they believe that this is fair, affordable and most importantly, meets their needs. The current situation of small scale rental is aptly captured as follows:

....for many ethnic-Bafokeng, rental income was the only from of income....Respondents in Ga-Luka generally referred to this type of economic advantage as the “hanging fruit” of the mining.....

..Backyard dwelling (another hanging fruit benefit) came at a price, however-namely, overcrowding. The renting out of backyards seemed lucrative to ethnic-Bafokeng and stand owners, so much so that, despite reported objections by Kgosi Leruo, the practice seemed entrenched. The financial incentive of the ‘living out allowance’ fuelled this practice.....

If he (Kgosi Leruo) wants to have a riot in his hands, let him dare to remove our tenants from the backyards. We do not have income; our children are not employed by the mines. This (backyard dwelling) is the only way we can raise an income for ourselves from the mines...

(Mnwana, 2015, p. 171)

d. Curbing urban sprawl and the consolidation of urban structure

It is commonly agreed that factors such as densities, urban form and general arrangements of housing are critical for equitable urban development patterns. According to Borel-Saladin and Turok (2016), these factors are also important for functional efficiency, which is critical leverage the poor needs for productive engagements with the urban space. This also enhances the possibilities for strong social linkages and bonds and integration. Poulsen and Silverman (2005), in their analysis of strategies for densification of low-income housing, have confirmed that backyard rooms increase residential densities and combat urban sprawl, while at the same time achieving a high level of efficiency for urban infrastructure investments. It must be noted that a number of proposals and discussions between the government

and the private sector is beginning to look into this market as part of the solution to the accommodation and housing problems in mining towns⁴³.

The patterns of development in, for example, the platinum belt in the North West province have been disparate and spread out, completely undermining the possibility for an integrated urban space. Given the patterns of development since 1990, it is clear that new patterns of settlements-development have taken root, often sprawling away from the existing settlements located outside the mines. Small-scale rental occurs within the existing settlements, thereby consolidating them and promoting and optimum use of the existing services infrastructure.

However, it should be noted that the structure of mining towns is such that it works against the very notion of urban efficiency. Although backyard rentals may be better-located in terms of access to urban amenities and infrastructure, it may leave miners worse off, particularly when there is no regular transport between place of work and home. The sprawling nature of mining towns works against the ideal urban structure and the assumed efficiencies. Although mining companies provide transport for their employees, they only do so in immediate areas in which they operate. This also reinforces the spatial arrangements and quasi-governance arrangements that have existed over time.

e. Empowerment and greater participation by host community

One of the pillars of the Mining Charter is that mining development and operations should seek to meaningfully empower the communities in which mining take place (Republic of South Africa, 2004). Although the Mining Charter provides for the empowerment and greater participation of host communities, there is no clear provision for empowerment in the human settlement component of the Charter.

This responsibility is solely left to the mining companies, who see to the fulfilment of these obligations in the Charter on their own. It is possible that one of the ways in which mining communities can increase their participation and benefits from mining is through the development and recognition of the small-scale rental linked to the mine housing solution. This could be done through incentivising the market to abide

⁴³ Programme review notes

by a standard regulation and norms while guaranteeing rental arrangements linked to the employers payroll system. This requires concrete partnership between the government, mines, labour and local communities.

4.4. CONCLUSIONS

It is important to point out that this dissertation does not seek to dismiss the moral and legal obligations of the state in intervening in areas where there seem to be a failure of both the state itself and private bodies entities, such as the mining companies, in carrying out their obligations. This dissertation seeks to point out the fundamental weaknesses in the approach that the state has taken in its attempt to correct these failures. It has been clear from the beginning that, notwithstanding the vigour with which the state sought to resolves the multiple nature of mining towns problems, it ignored the fundamentals upon which the intervention should be based.

Firstly, the state ignored its own lack of policy cohesion in the affairs of mining towns. This space remains contested, due to the different mandates and responsibilities amongst different state departments, notably Human Settlements and Mineral Resources.

Secondly, with regards to the intervention instruments, it was clear from the beginning that these were inappropriate and not designed for such complex historical and abstract spaces as mining towns. The problems encountered with public sector delivery instruments is testimony to the fact that the state never really invested in nor focused its full attention on the affairs of mining towns, to the extent that there is a consideration of a special subsidy dispensation for mining towns. Most important, though, is the lack of clarity around the kind of assistance that the state intends to offer in mining towns, especially as it relates to the mineworker population.

Thirdly, the institutional capacity challenges, as manifested at local government levels, together with the proposed requirements for partnerships, continues to undermine the intervention. It has been shown that mining towns exhibit deeply complicated development areas, both economically and socially. It is these complications that the government intervention did not fully unravel, not in terms of how it sought to understand the problem nor in the appropriateness of responses in

each of these towns. This, coupled with the prolonged absence of the government, meant it was always going to be difficult to obtain the kind of successes that the government has sought to achieve through the Mining Towns Programme.

There is no doubt that the government's intervention in mining towns is long overdue; however, this intervention needs to be placed within the context of broader debate on the dynamic changes in mining towns in terms of the economy, socioeconomic trends and institutional limitations and their impact and influences on housing delivery models. This debate is important in framing the future of mining towns within a broader development context, roles and responsibilities of both the state and the private sector. Fundamentally though, it is important to locate national interventions such as the Mining Towns Programme within the correct institutional framework to achieve any real success.

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APPENDIX 1: EXPERT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SPECIFIC SECTOR	SPECIFIC ROLE	NUMBER	POSITION/ROLE
Government	DPME*	1	Director
Government	DPME	1	DDG*
Government	DHS*	1	Director
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Social and Labour Plan remains the instrument tying the mines to deliver on the commitments as set out in the mining charter. With the growing focus on mining towns programme, how is this being integrated together with the human settlements development plans in mining towns? 2. The mining town's interventions is largely based on the idea of partnership in project planning and implementation between government and mining companies, how is this possible without the framework for engagement with the mining sector in general? 			
Independent researcher	Research experts	1	Senior Researcher
Academic expert	Academic Research	1	Senior Researcher
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One of the big area of concern for mining towns interventions is that it appears to be 'one size fit all' approach, and thus there are fundamental weaknesses with this approach, why do you think this is the case? 2. Why, in your opinion is it fundamental that there ought to be different approaches to different regions/towns within the context of mining towns interventions 3. Are there fundamental differences in the different mining towns selected, and what are these differences and why are these differences important in the framing of the response to the programme? 4. One of the premises in the intervention for mining towns is the theme brought through from the Breaking New Ground idea of creating functioning residential market; however it is not clear if all of the selected towns exhibit these conditions, 			

what is your comment on this?

5. Given the nature of instability 'boom and bust' nature of mining towns regions, is the scale and nature of investment proposed in the mining town's intervention appropriate one?
6. Why, in your opinion the intervention is largely housing led and less about other important interventions around the economic diversity of mining towns?

Private sector	Housing Manager	1	Head: Housing
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Private sector	Housing Manager	1	Corporate Management
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1. In your business planning for worker housing, what are some of the typical biggest challenges to packaging and delivery of housing project for miner community?
2. What is your response to the view that the mining town's intervention of government let mining companies shirk their responsibilities insofar as housing is concerned?
3. How do you balance the diverse interests of mining community between those that have desire to own houses and those that don't desire to own, and to what extent does this dynamic influence the planning and housing delivery obligations on the company
4. What is your response to the view that mining companies appear to be planning and implementing housing projects with little involvement of local government, and why is this so?

Union representative	Labour union	1	Union leader
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Union representative	Labour union	1	Union leader
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1. There has been a widely publicised story that miners are reluctant to take up occupation into government housing. Is this only the function of costs associated with that option or there other fundamental issues that needs addressing?
2. What are your views on the mining towns programme aimed at addressing

housing accommodation for mine workers?

3. To what extent have you (as labour) engaged with the with the mining towns programme within the context of worker-housing programme
4. What are your views to the claims that miners, at least most of them, are not necessarily interested or don't have deep interest in tying themselves to bond housing schemes? And why is this so